



**Cross-Cutting Fundamental Strategy**  
**FY 2012 Action Plan Annual Progress Report**  
**Strategy 1: 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.*

### Executive Summary

The Agency is continuing its outreach and conversation to include a broader range of people and communities in its day-to-day work and to expand its engagement with communities that have been historically under-represented in our decision-making processes. In FY 2012, the Agency's actions centered on public access to multi-lingual communication, interaction with media outlets that reach historically under-represented groups, improved access to and transparency of environmental data to support community and citizen involvement in decision making, and expanding public awareness and opportunities for involvement during all phases of the rulemaking process.

### Accomplishment Highlights:

- ✓ EPA launched 12 new websites with the One EPA Web Content Development Strategy to expand engagement with historically under-represented groups on high-priority topics such as climate change, enforcement, nutrient pollution, hydraulic fracturing, pesticides and consumers, San Francisco Watershed, Columbia River, etc.; 40 more websites are in development.
- ✓ The Agency launched the revamped Spanish website and a new Spanish language blog to make environmental information more accessible to Spanish speakers. It also increased Hispanic Facebook fans by 35% to more than 2,780 and increased Hispanic Twitter followers by 33% to more than 7,480.
- ✓ EPA conducted successful Hispanic outreach campaigns on a variety of environmental health issues such as National Poison Prevention Week (174 million people reached) and Asthma Awareness Month (14 million people reached).
- ✓ The Agency completed development of educational resources on fuel economy, conducting a chemical survey, lead blockers, mold, mercury, and bioaccumulation for Hispanic and English-speaking audiences.
- ✓ EPA developed Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs) with the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE), Discovery Education, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA), and Earth Echo to expand the reach of EPA-developed environmental education resources.
- ✓ EPA released a new data access and outreach tool, called *How's My Waterway* ([www.epa.gov/mywaterway](http://www.epa.gov/mywaterway)), in mid-October 2012 for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act. It is a multi-platform website application that helps users quickly find plain-English information on the condition of their local waters using a smart phone, tablet, or desktop computer.

### Challenges:

- ✓ The ecoAmbassadors program did not meet its goal of reaching 50 schools. We have realized through time and research that many college environmental programs exist across the country, some of which are organized by major environmental groups with significant funding and resources invested.

- ✓ EPA's Office of External Affairs and Environmental Education (OEAAE) has limited expertise in house to sustain high-caliber Spanish translations on a regular basis. OEAAE does not have the language skills in house to translate content into Asian languages. It is largely dependent on program offices for identifying content geared towards Asian languages as well as resources for the Asian language websites. Ongoing conversations with program and Regional offices are needed to leverage limited resources under a contract vehicle.

**FY 2012 Performance Summary**  
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FY 2012 Action Plan Activity	Status/Explanation ✓ = Activity Complete
<b>1. Expand interactions with historically under-represented groups (<i>Supports Principles 4, 5, 6, and 7</i>).</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the One EPA Web Content Development Strategy by developing at least 10 new websites for high-priority topics, such as reduce/reuse/recycle, enforcement, and Puget Sound, by the end of FY 2012.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>EPA has launched more than ten new sites and is continuing to transform high-priority topics in conformance with the One EPA Web Content Development Strategy. New sites include climate change, enforcement, nutrient pollution, hydraulic fracturing, pesticides and consumers, San Francisco Watershed, Columbia River, etc. Sites underway include careers, Toxics Release Inventory, Hudson River PCBs, Puget Sound, Green Chemistry, etc.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To reach historically under-represented groups, throughout the fiscal year, continue to develop and implement innovative media and stakeholder communications and engagement plans, targeting newspapers, magazines, and web sites; and, by the end of FY 2012, develop a process for translating high-priority materials.</li> </ul>	<p>For FY 2012, OEAE focused on Spanish for the translations of materials designed for Hispanic audiences. However, translations of press releases and relevant web content have been limited to key priority items. OEAE does not have the language skills in house to translate content into Asian languages. Ongoing conversations with program and Regional offices are needed to leverage limited resources under a contract vehicle. This dialogue was initiated with some program offices in FY 2012. For FY 2013, the translations roadmap and resources have to be identified.</p>
<b>2. Improve environmental awareness and stewardship through implementation of the One EPA Environmental Education initiatives (<i>Supports Principles 3 and 6</i>).</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Launch the ecoAmbassadors program in fifty (50) colleges and universities during the academic year September 2011 – May 2012.</li> </ul>	<p>The Office of Environmental Education (OEE) launched ecoAmbassadors programs at 25 colleges and universities in FY 2012. Through time and research, we have learned that many college environmental programs already exist across the country, some of which are organized by major environmental groups with significant funding and resources invested.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the integration of environmental education activities into Agency programs and expand the creation and distribution of educational resources for a range of target audiences. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ National Program Managers (NPMs) and the Office of Environmental Education (and Regions as appropriate) will collaborate to complete development of educational materials for at least 5 of the most significant environmental and public health programmatic areas by September 30, 2012. Issues will be selected by the Administrator's office with input from the NPMs.</li> <li>○ The Office of Environmental Education, in collaboration with the NPMs, will cultivate and establish 3 national and 5 regional/local partnerships to leverage both new and established distribution and outreach channels during FY 2012 to expand the reach of environmental education resources.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>OEE created six new educational resources with three more ready for internal Agency review. The six new resources posted on the EPA website are: fuel economy, conducting a chemical survey, lead blockers, mold, mercury, and bioaccumulation. Resources ready for review must go through internal program office and Agency-wide review to ensure a high quality and technically accurate product.</p> <p>OEE developed MOUs with four national organizations to enhance EPA relationships with leading partners. The building of relationships, agreement over joint products, and the completion of MOUs, including a careful legal review, can often be a time-consuming and detailed process.</p>
<b>3. Improve communication of environmental sampling results to the public in environmental emergency situations and at contaminated sites by using new communication methods to improve community engagement (<i>Supports Principles 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7</i>).</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evaluate the effectiveness of the color-coding methodology to explain sampling results being piloted at Superfund remedial and removal sites selected in FY 2011 in all 10 Regions, and develop an interim report on the results of the pilots by the end of FY 2012. The results could help us determine the potential for expanded use of this methodology in FY 2013 and beyond.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>Report documenting findings, challenges, and recommendations has been completed. Color coding can be a successful and effective tool for communicating data in a meaningful way to the public. However, it is not the right tool for every situation.</p>
<b>4. Improve access to and transparency of EPA's environmental data to support community and citizen involvement in decision-making (<i>Supports Principles 1, 2, 3, 5, and 7</i>).</b>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By the end of FY 2012, publish an additional 20 datasets and 20 data tools 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.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>EPA has added 162 new raw datasets and 28 data tools to Data.gov, exceeding our targets.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>By the end of FY 2012, establish and implement a process to collect public input on the types of data that are most useful to the public, our partners and stakeholders and use this input to create a formal process to identify and prioritize environmental data sets for publication.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>EPA's Developer's Forum provides access to existing EPA data resources and provides the ability to identify applications (with associated data) that individuals would find useful. For more information, see <a href="http://epa.gov/developer/index.html">http://epa.gov/developer/index.html</a>. The Office of Environmental Information (OEI) is currently evaluating methods and resources necessary to expand these functions in the future.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the expanded capability of the Environmental Dataset Gateway to create an inventory and dashboard to facilitate discovery and use of the EPA's data sets by the end of September 2012.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>The expansion of this service has significantly improved the data quality of EPA datasets, eliminating multiple duplicate records and complying with required data standards. It has also made it easier for data stewards to share their datasets, and for analysts and the public to discover and access them.</p>
<p><b>5. 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, rulemaking gateway, Greenversations, webinars and other tools (Supports Principles 3, 4, 6 and 7).</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue the expanded use of the Exchange tool and other social media tools to support programs such as the Toxics Release Inventory (TRI) in soliciting public input regarding the expansion of industry sectors covered under the Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA) section 313 during the pre-proposal stage. The TRI is one of the most versatile and widely used data resources for understanding industry impacts on the environment and any modifications to the reporting base are seen as very significant, making this an extremely appropriate topic for early public engagement.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>OEI is evaluating changes to the Exchange tool to increase participation and foster increased citizen involvement. In October 2011, the TRI Exchange served as an initial public discussion forum for the potential TRI Sectors Expansion. The Sectors Expansion action is still under regulatory development. At this time, the TRI home page refers to the TRI Exchange at <a href="http://exchange.regulations.gov/topic/trisectorsrule/">http://exchange.regulations.gov/topic/trisectorsrule/</a>, which continues to provide public access to the background information on this action.</p>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The OpenGov initiative will continue to seek out and support efforts that extend public participation, transparency, and collaboration from across the Agency by promoting the efforts through the Agency's OpenGov website and via quarterly progress reports that are often picked up by external parties and noted as leading examples of engagement.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>EPA has consistently posted updates to its OpenGov site on a quarterly basis. These updates have been an important tool in communicating the innovative activities that promote transparency and increased public access to the Agency's information. In addition to recognizing OpenGov-related projects Agency-wide, these updates have described the progress of the many flagship efforts that were included in the Agency's initial OpenGov plan, such as Urban Waters and the Office of Solid Waste's Community Engagement Initiative. More recently, EPA's OpenGov 2.0 plan released in April 2012 identified a number of new efforts that will be tracked as they mature--among them is a recently released multi-agency Freedom of Information Act solution, called FOIAonline.</p>
<p><b>6. Transform Public Access and Communication of Environmental Data. The EPA will seek opportunities to leverage the creativity of the public to address environmental or human health problems. The EPA will invite the public to build environmental applications or suggest ways to improve environmental protection. Such efforts enhance governmental effectiveness by using the creativity and energy of the public (<i>Supports Principles 3, 4, 6, and 7</i>).</b></p>	

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building on the momentum created by the Software Applications Development Challenge (the Apps Challenge) event in November 2011, promote use of EPA data in outside applications and recommend approaches to encourage development of additional environmental software applications and make them accessible to the public by the end of FY 2012. Explore approaches to obtain applications for EPA mission-related work.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">✓</p> <p>Apps for the Environment/Developer Central: EPA's first developers challenge to members of the public asked for applications that use EPA data to promote public health and environmental awareness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The "Apps for the Environment" Challenge harnessed the innovation and technical expertise of the software developer community to create applications that enable the public to access and make use of EPA's vast information assets.</li> <li>EPA received 100 ideas for new applications and 38 mobile apps entries, which ranged from dashboards to consumer-based information products and even games.</li> <li>This effort culminated in November 2011 with a formal celebration recognizing the creative efforts of participants and announcing the challenge winners.</li> <li>In June, 2012 EPA launched the Developer Central website, a "how-to" guide for using EPA data and Web services for application development.</li> <li>Developer Central promotes well-documented data and Web services in a central location, making it easier for developers to locate, understand, and access EPA data.</li> </ul>