



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

JUN 2 2011

THE ADMINISTRATOR

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Policy Statement on Climate-Change Adaptation**

Purpose

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is committed to identifying and responding to the challenges that a changing climate poses to human health and the environment.

Scientific evidence demonstrates that the climate is changing in unprecedented ways. These changes can pose significant challenges to the EPA's ability to fulfill its mission. The EPA must therefore adapt to climate change if it is to continue fulfilling its statutory, regulatory and programmatic requirements, chief among these protection of human health and the environment. Adaptation will require that the EPA anticipate and plan for future changes in climate and incorporate considerations of climate change into many of its programs, policies, rules and operations to ensure they are effective under future climatic conditions. Through climate-adaptation planning, the EPA will also contribute to the federal government's leadership role in promoting sustainability and in pursuing the vision of a resilient, healthy and prosperous nation in the face of a changing climate.

Background

In January 2010 I identified seven priorities for the EPA's future, one of which is to take action on climate change. This priority calls for measures to anticipate and adapt to the effects climate change will have on the EPA's core mission as well as actions to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. It also includes helping the most vulnerable people and places reduce their exposure and sensitivity to climate change and improving their capacity to predict, prepare for and avoid adverse impacts. This priority is reflected in the EPA's *FY 2011-2015 Strategic Plan*, which includes a heightened focus on cross-program activities addressing climate-change adaptation and mitigation. The strategic plan includes strategic measures for addressing climate change and explicit commitments for attaining the strategic goals now included in the EPA's annual budget submissions to Congress.

I am proud of the progress the EPA has already made. Many programs throughout the EPA have begun to consider and address the implications of a changing climate. These efforts have laid a solid foundation on which to mainstream climate-change adaptation into all of the EPA's programs. Nevertheless, more needs to be done.

Therefore, I am directing that an EPA climate-change adaptation plan be developed and implemented to integrate climate adaptation into the agency's programs, policies, rules and operations. This effort will support the strategic goal of ensuring that the EPA can continue to fulfill its core mission as the climate changes. This policy directive also responds to a key recommendation made by the Interagency Climate-

Change Adaptation Task Force in October 2010 that every federal agency develop and implement a climate-change adaptation plan to address the challenges climate change poses to its mission, operations and programs.

Additionally, I am directing that every national-program office and every regional office develop an implementation plan providing more detail on how it will carry out the work called for in the agencywide plan. Each national-program and regional office is best positioned to determine how to integrate climate adaptation into its own planning and work and will have flexibility to develop its implementation plan in a manner consistent and compatible with its own circumstances and objectives.

Specific Requirements

To ensure effective adaptation planning and implementation, the EPA shall:

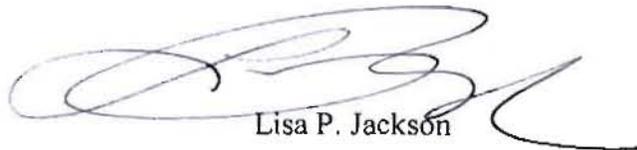
- a. Develop and publish the *EPA Climate-Change Adaptation Plan* by June 2012 or earlier and update it regularly;
- b. Fully implement the climate-change adaptation *Implementing Instructions for Federal Agency Climate-Change Adaptation Planning* issued by the White House Council on Environmental Quality on March 4, 2011, under Executive Order 13514 *Federal Leadership in Environmental, Energy, and Economic Performance* and other applicable authorities;
- c. Apply the guiding principles and planning framework for climate-change adaptation found in the October 5, 2010, *Progress Report of the Interagency Climate-Change Adaptation Task Force: Recommended Actions in Support of a National Climate-Change Adaptation Strategy*;
- d. Identify priority activities and actions that must be taken at different times to carry out the actions called for in this policy statement and the *EPA Climate-Change Adaptation Plan*, and reflect these priorities in the EPA's annual budget submissions;
- e. Develop improved strategic measures and annual performance measures for evaluating progress toward attaining the desired long-term outcome of mainstreaming climate adaptation into the EPA's programs, policies, rules and operations;
- f. Identify for the Office of General Council areas where legal analysis is needed to carry out agency actions called for in this policy statement;
- g. Focus on (1) understanding the environmental-justice implications of climate-change impacts and identifying populations and communities vulnerable to climate change and with limited capacity to adapt and (2) incorporating consideration of environmental-justice issues into the design and evaluation of adaptation strategies;
- h. Coordinate with other agencies and interagency efforts, including the Interagency Climate-Change Adaptation Task Force, on climate-change adaptation issues that cut across agency jurisdictions, including areas where national adaptation plans are being or have been developed, and identify a process for sharing climate-change-adaptation planning information throughout the agency and with the public; and
- i. Monitor and evaluate efforts to adapt to climate change to continually assess the effectiveness of actions and adjust as necessary.

Coordination and Implementation

The EPA's senior climate-change adaptation official is responsible for ensuring implementation of all aspects of this policy. This order does not alter or affect any existing duty or authority of individual offices.

The Cross-EPA Work Group on Climate-Change Adaptation, established by the Deputy Administrator in January 2011, is responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of the *EPA Climate-Change Adaptation Plan*. The EPA's senior climate-change adaptation official serves as chairperson of the work group, which includes representation from every national-program and regional office as appropriate.

This policy directive is effective immediately and will remain in effect until it is amended, superseded or revoked.



Lisa P. Jackson