

State Environmental Goals and Indicators Project

Survey of Environmental
Management Activity

in

State Environmental and Natural
Resource Agencies

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What is the State Environmental Goals and Indicators Project? SEGIP is a cooperative agreement between the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Florida Center for Public Management whose purpose is *to assist state environmental agencies in improving their environmental management capabilities by providing procedural, technical and financial assistance in the development of environmental goals and indicators and in integrating such goals and indicators into their environmental management systems.* The objectives of the Project are to:

- increase the number of state environmental agencies utilizing goals and indicators,
- enhance the quality of state agency environmental indicator systems,
- improve the integration of goals and indicators with other management tools and techniques,
- establish a network of policymaking and technical professionals from all state environmental agencies who have a broad interest in environmental management, and,
- facilitate the movement of data sets suitable for development of indicators to states for their use.

A summary of the Project's technical and limited financial support capabilities is enclosed with this Survey.

Why is the Survey of environmental management activity being undertaken? The Survey is being undertaken to describe for the first time state environmental management agencies' efforts to use new environmental management techniques and tools. The results of the Survey will be used to inform the Project and U.S. EPA comprehensively about what is going on in state agencies and where best to focus technical assistance efforts.

Who will receive Survey results? The initial Survey responses will be summarized and presented to all survey participants, to state and federal indicator processes, to regional system programs, and to national-level state interest groups. Survey results will be presented at the National Environmental Management Practitioners Conference January 28-31, 1996 and subsequently be published in hard copy and made available on the Internet at the Project's home page site. The Survey results will then become a dynamic directory of state environmental indicator programs and allied environmental management activities.

Who will be responding to the Survey? Project staff have formally contacted over 90 state environmental management agencies (both those dealing with environmental protection and natural resources) through the secretary's/commissioner's office and requested the identification of an individual who has management and policymaking responsibilities or who has direct access to such an individual, and who has interests or responsibilities concerning environmental management issues, and one or more technical staff who are qualified to provide comments and information with regard to the development of environmental indicators.

How will participants in the Survey be involved in the Project after completing the Survey? The Project has identified over 2,500 state, federal, regional and nongovernmental environmental indicator practitioners. A series of directories has been created, will be continually updated, and will serve as the basis for an environmental management practitioners' Network. Future activities for the Network will include:

- providing reviews of the activities of federal indicator activities and products,
- providing advice on the development of indicator systems and indicators for state use,
- offering perspective on federal environmental management initiatives,
- communicating to their own agencies opportunities for improving management processes, and
- providing the communication framework for states to exchange information among themselves.

Instructions to Survey Respondents: The person receiving the survey should act a liaison in their agency by taking apart the Survey and distributing the individual pages to the most appropriate persons in that agency for the brief responses needed. No one person should have to spend a great amount of time filling out the survey. We thank you in advance for your timely cooperation.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY OR TYPE RESPONSES

*State Environmental Goals and Indicators Project
Survey of Environmental Indicator Activity
in
State Environmental Management Agencies*

General Information

Organization/Agency:

Contact:

Title:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Agency Description: (Please describe the overall mandate, mission statement and responsibilities of your agency in not more than 150 words)

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY OR TYPE RESPONSES

Environmental Status And Trends Reporting

Environmental indicators describe, analyze, and present scientifically-based information on environmental conditions, trends and their significance. Environmental indicators look at the effects of human activities on the environment as well as the implications of those actions for human health, quality of life, and the integrity of ecosystems. To be meaningful to decisionmakers, environmental indicators are periodically reported and/or displayed in many forms including state-of-the-environment reports.

Has your agency undertaken **environmental status and trends reporting?**__
(If no, please continue on the following page)

If so, what is the format of the reporting:

- _____ *brief report*
- _____ *fact sheets*
- _____ *multiple volume report*
- _____ *data catalog*
- _____ *monitoring report*
- _____ *state of environment report*

What is the purpose of the report:

- _____ *public information*
- _____ *public relations*
- _____ *environmental education*
- _____ *legislative requirement*
- _____ *internal agency use*
- _____ *strategic planning*
- _____ *setting goals and objectives*
- _____ *baseline data*

Please provide a contact person for environmental status and trends reporting in your agency.

Contact:

Title:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Are environmental indicators part of the status and trends report?_____

If so, please provide any publication, such as a state-of-the-environment report, or fact sheets describing or illustrating the indicators.

Which of these publications are available electronically?

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Environmental Goals Project

Environmental goals are target levels of performance expressed as tangible, measurable objectives, against which actual achievement can be compared, including goals expressed as a quantitative standard, value, or rate (e.g., by 2000, United States greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced to the recorded 1990 emissions level).

Does your agency have an **environmental goals project**?__
(If no, please continue on the following page)

If so, briefly describe the goal setting process.

Please provide a contact person for environmental goal setting process in your state.

Contact:

Title:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Is the goals project linked to a benchmarks or environmental indicators process? _____

If goals have been set, are there measures (benchmarks, indicators, milestones) for noting environmental progress toward meeting the goals? _____

If so, please provide any publication or fact sheets describing or illustrating the measures. Please provide any publication or project summary describing the goals setting process.

Which of these publications are available electronically?

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY OR TYPE RESPONSES

State Comparative Risk Project

Comparative risk assessment is a comprehensive, systematic, and disciplined approach to evaluating how environmental issues compare to each other. Comparative risk is based on the premise that not all environmental problems pose the same degree of risk to human or ecological health and that, due to limited resources, all environmental problems cannot be addressed fully or at the same time. State comparative risk projects identify and assess all environmental problems, prioritize/rank the problems according to risk, and develop management strategies to reduce the greatest amount of risk for the least amount of resources.

Is your agency involved in a **state comparative risk project?** _____
(If no, please continue on the following page)

If so, what is the status of that Project:

- _____ *planning*
- _____ *issue identification*
- _____ *risk assessment*
- _____ *risk management*
- _____ *implementation*

Please provide a contact person for comparative risk assessment in your agency.

Contact:

Title:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Are environmental indicators being developed as part of the comparative risk project?_

If so, please provide any publication or fact sheets describing or illustrating the indicators.
Which of these publications are available electronically?

If indicators are being developed, are they:

- _____ an integral part of the process of developing issue papers
- _____ the starting point for issue identification or development
- _____ being developed as part of the risk management phase of the project
- _____ being developed after project completion
- _____ used to monitor progress toward risk reduction

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Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is the process by which organizations identify the major internal and external factors of change influencing their future and prepare to capitalize on the opportunities provided by such change. Strategic planning emphasizes the achievement of important, mission-based results and promotes measurement of progress.

Does your agency have a **strategic planning** process? _____

If so, please provide a copy of the Strategic Plan.

(If no, please continue on the following page)

If so, what is the strategic planning process used for?

_____ *agency evaluation of program effectiveness*

_____ *budget*

_____ *program planning*

_____ *setting goals and objectives*

_____ *legislative/gubernatorial oversight*

Is the strategic planning process mandated? _____ voluntary? _____

Please provide a contact person for strategic planning in your agency.

Contact:

Title:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Are environmental indicators used as part of the strategic planning process? __

If so, please provide any publication or fact sheets describing or illustrating the indicators.

Which of these publications are available electronically?

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Benchmarks

Benchmarking processes involve shaping a vision of the future, crafting goals, and setting targets to mark progress. Historical data are used to establish a baseline for various targets. Benchmarks or milestones are established as periodic markers along a timeline toward the targeted goals. In response to each benchmark, periodic data measures or indicators, are collected and compiled in annual or biennial reports that show progress toward attainment of the goals.

Does your state have a **benchmarks** program or project? _____
(If no, please continue on the following page)

If so, please list the benchmarks for the environment and the natural economic resources below.

Please provide a contact person for the benchmarks program in your state.

Contact:

Title:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

Please provide any publication or fact sheets describing or illustrating the benchmarks. Please provide any publication or project summary describing the benchmarks program.

Which of these publications are available electronically?

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY OR TYPE RESPONSES

Place-Based Or Ecosystem Management

Since the late 1980s, many environmental managers, scientists and natural resources policy analysts have advocated a new, broader approach to managing lands and natural resources called "ecosystem management." Ecosystem management integrates scientific knowledge of ecological relationships within a complex sociopolitical and values framework toward the general goal of protecting native ecosystem integrity over the long term. The phrase "place-based" is derived from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's statement that it had been "program-driven" rather than "place-driven" in concentrating its efforts on issuing permits, establishing pollutant limits, and setting national standards rather than the overall environmental health of specific ecosystems.

Is your agency undertaking **place-based or ecosystem management** oriented projects? _____
(If no, please continue on the following page)

If so, please list the projects below by place or ecosystem name.

Please provide a contact person for the place-based or ecosystem management initiatives in your agency.

- Contact:**
- Title:**
- Address:**
- Phone:**
- Fax:**
- E-mail:**

How are the place-based and ecosystem management projects defined?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| _____ <i>watersheds</i> | _____ <i>geopolitical demarcations</i> |
| _____ <i>ecological boundaries</i> | _____ <i>statistical sampling</i> |
| _____ <i>ecoregions</i> | _____ <i>grid/methodology</i> |
| _____ <i>biogeographic regions</i> | |

Have environmental indicators for these places and ecosystems been identified or developed? _

If so, please provide any publication or fact sheets describing or illustrating the indicators.

Please provide any publication or project summary describing the place-based or ecosystem management project and its process.

Which of these publications are available electronically?

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Sustainable Development

Sustainable development or sustainability refers to initiatives that link together long-term cultural, economic, and environmental health and vitality. Sustainable development is often defined as “development meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” The goal of many sustainable development projects is to integrate environmental and development concerns, particularly as they relate to the management and use of natural economic resources.

Is your agency involved in a **sustainable development** initiative? _____
(If no, please continue on the following page)

If so, describe the focus of the initiative briefly.

Please provide a contact person for the sustainable development initiative in your agency.

Contact:

Title:

Address:

Phone:

Fax:

E-mail:

What natural economic resources are being addressed by the sustainable development initiative?

- _____ *forests*
- _____ *fisheries*
- _____ *agriculture*
- _____ *mineral resources*
- _____ *sand and gravel*
- _____ *public lands*
- _____ *renewable energy resources*
- _____ *nonrenewable energy resources*
- _____ *soil*

Have indicators for these natural economic resources been developed? _____

If so, please provide any publication or fact sheets describing or illustrating the indicators.
Please provide any publication or project summary describing the sustainable development initiative.

Which of these publications are available electronically?

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General Needs

What specific needs do you anticipate as you move toward increasing reliance on monitoring and environmental indicators to measure progress?

What do you see as the biggest barriers to successful use of goals and indicators to measure progress?

What can EPA **regions** do to improve your ability to develop and use environmental goals and indicators?

What can EPA **HQ** do to improve your ability to develop and use environmental goals and indicators?

What can the **Project** do to assist the development and use of environmental indicators in your agency?

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Technical Assistance Needs

Does your agency have the capability to browse the Internet for environmental information? ___

How many connections to the Internet does your agency have? _____

If your agency is connected to the Internet, which browser tool do you use?

_____ Netscape

_____ Mosaic

Other _____

Does your agency regularly retrieve environmental information from the Internet? _____

If so, does your agency acquire:

_____ publications

_____ data sets

other _____

Would having other states' environmental indicator reports available on the Internet be of use to you? _____

Would having environmental data sets that could be used for indicator development on the Internet be of use to you? _____

Would your agency benefit from on-site technical assistance to:

_____ *plan/design an environmental indicators system*

_____ *develop place-based indicators*

_____ *integrate indicator development with comparative risk assessment*

_____ *assist with a state-of-the-environment report*

_____ *discuss uses of indicators*

_____ *integrate indicators into management system*

_____ *technical aspects of indicator selection and development*

other _____

Would meeting with other states in your U.S. EPA region to discuss environmental indicators be of use to you? _____

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Data Needs For Indicators And Environmental Management

Is your agency involved an **information resource management** process? _____

If so, what aspects of information resource management are being addressed:

_____ *inventory of environmental information*

_____ *inventory of programmatic information*

_____ *data gaps*

_____ *data quality*

_____ *data formatting*

_____ *sharing electronic data*

_____ *data collection*

_____ *data distribution*

_____ *maintenance of data*

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY OR TYPE RESPONSES

Does your agency have an inventory of available environmental information relevant to the development of environmental indicators or for policy planning and decisionmaking?_

If such an inventory exists, please provide.

Does your agency have a classification scheme summarizing the availability, quality, and spatial coverage of its environmental data sets?___

If such a classification scheme exists, please provide.

Does your agency have a standard metadata format for available data sets?_____

If such a format exists, please provide.

Please list your agency's highest priority environmental data needs for indicator development, strategic planning, and decisionmaking.

Are there national data sets that can be disaggregated to the state level that would be particularly useful to your agency?_____

If so, please list the most useful data sets.

Would a set of environmental indicators drawn from national data sets disaggregable to the state level be of use to your agency in enhancing environmental management activities?_____

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Peer-to-Peer Exchange Program

The State Environmental Goals and Indicators Project peer-to-peer exchange program identifies policy and technical staff in state environmental agencies who have particular environmental indicator expertise and are willing to share their experience with colleagues on a peer-to-peer basis. It also identifies agencies that would welcome a short-term visit from indicator practitioners on a particular aspect of indicator use or development. The Project will match appropriate expertise with demand and will facilitate and fund travel to enable exchanges of ideas and information beginning in January 1996.

Criteria for indicator assistance **providers** include:

possess adequate communication skills and some ability to express experiences in a motivational manner,
<u>and</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. demonstrated experience in developing an environmental indicator system,
<u>or</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. developed a state-of-the-environment report,
<u>or</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3. have developed indicators in the context of a place-based/ecosystem management project or an environmental assessment program.

Are there individuals within your agency who meet these criteria and would be interested in participating as a provider? _____

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Criteria for indicator assistance **receivers** include:

- 1. have begun an indicator initiative (environmental indicator system or state-of-the-environment report),
- or
- 2. be the project manager for an environmental management initiative (comparative risk assessment, ecosystem management, sustainable development) that would benefit from and be enhanced by environmental indicators.

Does your agency meet these qualifications, and, if so, would your agency be interested in receiving an indicator practitioner? _____

Contact: _____ Phone Number: _____