

In 1994, [Executive Order 12898 - Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-income Populations](#)<sup>1</sup>, set forth an order for Federal agencies to *make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of its programs, policies, and activities on minority populations and low-income populations [including Native Americans] in the United States and its territories and possessions, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the Commonwealth of the Mariana Islands.*

Established through the Order, the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice ([EJ IWG](#)) works to ensure environmental and public health protection is afforded to all Americans<sup>2</sup>. Comprised of 17 agencies plus White House offices, the EJ IWG ensures the government is: accessible to communities with environmental justice concerns, aware of communities' environmental justice issues, coordinating and collaborating federal assistance, and accountable to environmental justice stakeholders. The EJ IWG website provides links to the [Federal EJ Strategies](#) and progress reports<sup>3</sup>. Various federal agencies, through coordination by EPA and the State Department, also support the implementation of [international human rights treaties](#), by working collaboratively to address the environmental and public health concerns raised within the context of these agreements<sup>4</sup>.

The EPA is the convener of the EJ IWG, which provides leadership, guidance, and support to ensure the Federal Government's approach to environmental and public health protection is inclusive and fair, by:

- Coordinating a concerted effort by federal agencies to directly address the environmental, social, economic, and public health burdens in minority, low-income, indigenous and tribal communities;
- Implementing policies for measurable impacts in communities with environmental justice concerns;
- Focusing federal resources and technical assistance to address disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects; and
- Developing partnerships with state, local and tribal governments, colleges, universities, community-based organizations, and other organizations outside of the federal government to facilitate long-term support for, and improvement in, overburdened communities.

The EJ IWG's [2016-2018 Framework for Collaboration](#)<sup>5</sup> further outlines goals to focus federal agency collaboration to improve quality-of-life and support economic opportunities in overburdened and under-resourced communities, in support of the EJ IWG's [Charter](#)<sup>6</sup>.

The EJ IWG includes committees, such as the Native American/Indigenous Peoples Committee to develop guidance and support for [EJ for Tribes and Indigenous Peoples](#)<sup>7</sup> and a [National Environmental Policy Act committee](#)<sup>8</sup> to foster meaningful community engagement and tribal consultation. All agencies, in accordance with [Executive Order 13175 - Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments](#)<sup>9</sup> and other federal standards seek to ensure meaningful and timely input by tribal officials in their decisions that have tribal implications. U.S. Federal policy supports tribal self-governance, sovereignty and self-determination, while seeking to honor treaty rights and other trust responsibilities. The Bureau of Indian Affairs ([BIA](#)) may assist other agencies in coordinating effective tribal consultation<sup>10</sup>. Due to [severe impacts of climate change on indigenous lifeways](#)<sup>11</sup>, the BIA [Tribal Climate Resilience Program \(TCRP\)](#)<sup>12</sup> also funds planning and training for climate adaptation for federally-recognized Tribes and Alaska Native Communities, administers the federal-wide [Tribal Climate Resilience Resource Guide](#)<sup>13</sup>, and provides regionally-focused Tribal support and coordination through [BIA Regional Tribal Climate Liaisons](#)<sup>14</sup> sponsored by inter-tribal groups and hosted by [DOI Climate Science Centers](#)<sup>15</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Clinton, W.J. 1994. Executive Order 12898 of February 11, 1994: Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations. The White House – William J. Clinton.

<https://www.archives.gov/files/federal-register/executive-orders/pdf/12898.pdf>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>2</sup> EPA. 2017. Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice (EJ IWG) - website. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/federal-interagency-working-group-environmental-justice-ej-iwg>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>3</sup> EPA. 2017. Federal Agency EJ Strategies & Annual Implementation Progress Reports - links. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/federal-interagency-working-group-environmental-justice-ej-iwg#examine>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>4</sup> EPA. 2017. EPA's Role in Promoting International Human Rights, Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and Environmental Justice. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - website. <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/epas-role-promoting-international-human-rights-rights-indigenous-peoples-and>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>5</sup> EPA. 2017. EJ IWG Framework for Collaboration – document access. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/ej-iwg-framework-collaboration>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>6</sup> EPA. 2017. Charter for Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice – document access. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/charter-interagency-working-group-environmental-justice>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>7</sup> EPA. 2017. Environmental Justice for Tribes and Indigenous Peoples - website. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-tribes-and-indigenous-peoples>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>8</sup> EPA. 2017. Environmental Justice and National Environmental Policy Act - website. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). <https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/environmental-justice-and-national-environmental-policy-act>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Clinton, W.J. 1994. Executive Order 13175 of November 6, 2000: Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments. The White House – William J. Clinton. <https://www.bia.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/text/idc-002460.pdf>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>10</sup> BIA. 2017. Presidential and BIA Tribal Consultation Documents - website. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Indian Affairs. <https://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/AS-IA/Consultation/Templates/index.htm>. Accessed April 2017

<sup>11</sup> NOAA. 2017. Tribal Nations Topic in the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit - weblink. National U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). <https://toolkit.climate.gov/topics/tribal-nations>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>12</sup> BIA. 2017. Climate Change / Tribal Climate Resilience Program (TCRP) - website. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Indian Affairs. <https://www.indianaffairs.gov/WhoWeAre/BIA/climatechange/>. Accessed April 2017

<sup>13</sup> NOAA. 2017. Tribal Climate Resilience Resource Guide - overview. National U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). <https://toolkit.climate.gov/tool/tribal-climate-resilience-resource-guide>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>14</sup> DOI. 2017. BIA TCRP BIA Regional Tribal Liaison Program – website. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, Indian Affairs, BIA TCRP. <https://www.indianaffairs.gov/WhoWeAre/BIA/climatechange/index.htm#liaisons>. Accessed April 2017.

<sup>15</sup> DOI. 2017. Dept of the Interior, Climate Science Centers – website. U.S. Department of Interior (DOI). <https://nccwsc.usgs.gov/csc>. Accessed April 2017.