

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Talking Points

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Thank you. I am happy to be here with you today. OCFO is pleased to join our colleagues for this week's EMAP Symposium and in examining the admirable efforts of the EMAP program.

OCFO manages both the Agency's strategic planning process that produces a 5-year horizon strategic plan every 3 years and develops our annual performance plan, publishing a Performance and Accountability Report at the end of each fiscal year.

I am here because I am a firm believer in the importance of accountability and managing for environmental results, and it is efforts like EMAP that helps us show those results.

EMAP provides the environmental information that enables us to set our far-reaching long term environmental goals and develop better performance measures to track our progress - however slow or fast - along the way.

Our vision for using measures to manage is to end up with a limited set of measures that are used regularly to manage programs and make decisions. The Deputy Administrator who is focusing the Agency's attention on performance management has said, *"Measure for reporting don't mean much: measures for management are vital."*

To achieve our vision we have to ensure that our performance measures are concise, clearly defined, timely and transparent, and supported by valid information so that we can demonstrate environmental progress.

EMAP's ability to develop creative new ways to monitor the condition of our environmental assets is one part of our path ahead to achieve our vision of performance measurement.

In fact, several of the long-term performance metrics in our “Clean and Safe Water” goal of *EPA’s 2006-2011 Strategic Plan* are derived from EMAP-designed data, including a metric about the condition of Wadeable streams.

Incorporating EMAP-based measures in our strategic plan is a great example of what EPA wants to do in institutionalizing and streamlining effective performance management. After all, good performance measurement is important to everyone. But to understand the environmental outcomes (not outputs) of our collective actions, you have to measure the right things – the actual condition of air, land, water, their confluences, and the implications for the overall health of our people and our living spaces. EMAP’s indicators ultimately inform our policy choices about what those right things are.

At this point I’d like to say a little more about what we in the planning community have learned from the example of EMAP.

First, EMAP raises key opportunities for efficiencies in the measurement arena. As others have mentioned, EMAP’s efforts in monitoring water quality started as supplying a very important missing piece of information – a statistically valid overall assessment of the condition of fresh and estuarine waters, on a national scale. Having this information helps EPA institutionalize EMAP information into our regulatory monitoring responsibilities.

With EMAP’s efficient, statistically valid data now available, it should be easier to harmonize federal and state data collection. Looking at this Symposium’s agenda, I see that there is a major session addressed to just that topic tomorrow morning.

In short, it is these opportunities for efficiencies and integration – and improved scientific soundness – that excite us in OCFO. In these times of serious resource constraints, we must continue to look for these sorts of “win-win” opportunities.

Also, our experience with EMAP exemplifies how the Agency should take advantage of scientific/technological advances. EMAP has made

its name by promoting a radical departure in monitoring strategy – statistically-based monitoring.

As that innovation has become the norm, we are beginning to look ahead collectively to what the future holds for environmental monitoring, an example is the advent of sensor technologies. If the promise of these advances is realized, the Agency, its stakeholders, and its partners may be in a place we never could have previously dreamed of – near-“real-time” measurements of the most critical environmental parameters everywhere we need it.

Real-time data would enable us to eliminate numerous problems we have with current data lags of performance measurement. It would enable us to see the environmental results of our actions quickly and make adjustments to program strategies (on a broad scale) or to facility operating parameters and pollution control equipment (on a more local scale). It has the potential to fundamentally change how we do business. It would enable us to truly manage to environmental outcomes, directly.

EMAP is a great example of how we have collectively made strides providing the data needed to measure our achievements in meeting our environmental goals and our mission of protecting human health and the environment. We in OCFO will continue to acknowledge and support EMAP as an important building block of our performance culture here at EPA. Together we will continue to move forward to measure the right things the right way. Thank you.