

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

Women and Environment White House Briefing - March 26, 2012

In six action workshops, participants noted several of the following issues were of concern:

Group #1

- Food: re: Carbon Footprint - Transport/goods movement/distribution
- Reverse deforestation
- Climate Change solutions - "Safe" dialogue
- Consistent messaging across agencies
 - To the right audiences
 - Youth voice – hearing their messages/environmental education/STEM
 - Environmental Justice – low income, poorer communities
 - Clean Air/Clean Water
 - Women's voices . . .
 - *Amplify* and *Blog*: taking messages back to our communities!
- Toxins in the environment – links to cancer
 - Cleaning solutions
 - Hair care products
 - Cosmetics
- Overpopulation – education
- Climate justice – enforcement for polluters
- Comprehensive framework to address issues
 - Gang violence
 - Mountain top removal
- Comprehensive Communication & Education on climate strategy, especially in EJ communities
- Messaging and Education

Group #2

- Inclusive and Engaged Leadership – meet people where they are for awareness and action
- Quality of life issues for people in stressed (low-income) communities – having basic needs met

- With public health as the focus, it will force the conversation about air & water quality along with community-based solutions
- What research is EPA doing to support the medical research on developing diagnostic testing for toxins such as black mold?
- The built environment & its impact on the health of communities
- Clean energy proliferation
- The most important issue we face is how to evolve away from a petroleum-based economy while protecting/improving our water quality & clean air regulations to safeguard public health
- How to accelerate the transition to a “no regrets” clean energy economy by powering our nation without making climate change worse or damaging our health.
- Ensure political and public support for the Administration to fully implement environment[a] laws such as the Clean Water Act & the Clean Air Act & RCRA
- Restore leadership at the highest levels of government to the a renewed commitment to the value of conservation for our future generations
- We have no one environmental issue. It’s more a people issue & the will & know-how to change – and a better conviction that the change is good for business, good for families & good for our economy & nation.

Group #3

- Amplify conversation on climate change – need split screen = Global vision but also need civic engagement
- Need conversation on environmental issues in general, esp. in minority communities – Need environmental “brand”, e.g., allocate fines for community education
- Educate public – develop critical thinking skills
- Environmental issues need to be everyone’s issues

- Need environmental education on basic issues and health issues – education must also occur in the community
- Get corporations involved – find stories that translate into actions for communities
- Environment as a theme for jobs and job creation – needs vision and incentives at local and state level. Sustainability = jobs
- Tie healthy living to the environment (esp. healthy kids)
- How we generate and use electricity
- Use “sustainability” as a unifying term – include health connection
- Encourage women/girls in STEM fields

Group #4

- Degradation of ecosystems
- Public transportation options
- Public transportation dialogue
- Availability of clean water
- Water infrastructure
- Translating science into public action
- Future justice and translating science into action
- Government structures
- Protecting whistleblowers
- Mobilizing people
- Advocacy

- Leverage capital markets and incentivization systems
- Water and health issues
- Environmental literacy
- Global warming and non-renewable energy
- Dependence on fossil fuels
- Environmental literacy in others
- Continued appreciation and involvement in environmental stewardship
- Resiliency and climate change mitigation
- Build on existing green house gas regulations

Group #5

- Healthy children and families
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- All research on environmental health risks to women should be collected in a single website with a duty to consult the website when sustainability and environmental decisions are made.
 - Coal ash – 140 million tons a year, going up in volume and toxicity with the MATS rule. There are more damage cases to come, which means more poisoned water across the country. If this doesn't get resolved in the next 3-5 years, communities and waterways will remain unprotected indefinitely.
 - Taking EPA retail: Preventing harmful experiences to children. Site design/Chemical cleanups/Indoor Air Quality/Mold/Integrated pest Management/Green cleaning and Onsite intervention
 - Chemical policy reform
 - Increased issues with fracking and water/air contamination
 - Air quality protection to reduce asthma and upper respiratory issues

- Pesticide exposures and related neurodevelopmental concerns – not starting early enough
- Improving air quality – children’s health, women’s health, economic impact
- Perinatal health and environmental exposures – increasing number of families led by women; men without strong family ties making policy
- Collaboration and education
- Gender equity

Group #6

- The false choice between jobs and clean air and water
- Transboundary pollutants
- Incentivize environmental change
 - Climate change
 - Environmental issues in the developing world (Mali)
 - o Desertification
 - o 99% without electricity
 - o Need to spur micro-enterprise through microcredit and sustainable development
- Climate, water, energy, food – we must provide multiple access points for civic engagement in climate change, scalable impact needs
- The most pressing issue for the environment is making healthy ecosystems everyone’s issue – among conservatives and liberals, for business, environmental and faith communities. Concern for environment needs to be as ubiquitous as breathing air and drinking water.
- Biggest issue facing environment: job creation and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- Ocean Acidification: The ocean produces over half the oxygen we breathe; it sustains fish that are a major (and ongoing) food source around the world. With ocean acidification, we are looking at a potential regime shift in the ocean that may have devastating impacts on a global scale.
- MY greatest concern about the environment and our natural resources is not specific or one issue. My concern is the need to provide environmental education opportunities for all citizens

to gain the knowledge, critical thinking skills and understanding about the complexities of all of the environmental issues that we will need to address and how they are all interconnected.

- Dissemination of education and information on the environment to urban communities in a captivating manner.
- Accelerate shift to renewable energy sources
- Limiting corporate influence over policy and politics
- Stop poisoning people! Reform chemicals policy, address environmental justice and accelerate green chemistry
- I am from Colorado and our issues surround water protection and energy actions. How do we protect our water resource and ensure we will have water?
- Women and men are facing fertility problems at higher rates than before. Environmental endocrine disruptors are suspected and need greater scrutiny in regulatory research.
- Need to connect kids with nature – environmental engagement and education programs are critical to broaden environmental interest and action broadly – MISSION CRITICAL.
- Ensuring America's natural resources are clean and that we have safe water in quantities need by all. Develop better messaging and get the administrator to talk about it.
- Broaden the White House view on the environment beyond a topic normally messaged to environmental groups and students. It is a values-based issue that women and mothers know that a healthy environment makes for a good economy and healthy future for our kids. This should be a broader frame for addressing the substantive problem on how we generate and use electricity and fuel. The environment and public health impacts around fossil fuel-based energy are growing. Mining/extracting/fracking/drilling/burning/dumping/ and we are only nibbling at the problem.
- Poverty – Due to mega-cities and overcrowding (1/2 population in urban areas), an environmental catastrophe
- Local and state initiatives to be promoted by EPA

- Environmental issue for the next five years is energy efficiency and creative ways to accomplish, i.e., micro-grid, community aggregation power purchase.
- The most important issue is the increase in chemicals in the soil, lack of trees due to urban sprawl, and air pollutants that will impact women's and children's air and food supply.