

Scorecard Department of Commerce



Department of Commerce

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About the Department of Commerce (DOC)

The mission of the Department of Commerce (DOC) is to create the conditions for economic growth and opportunity for all communities. Through its 13 bureaus, the DOC works to drive U.S. economic competitiveness, strengthen domestic industry, and spur the growth of quality jobs in all communities across the country. The DOC serves as the voice of business in the federal government, and at the same time, the Department touches and serves every American every day.

This page provides information on how **the Department of Commerce (DOC)** is working to advance environmental justice for communities across America. It is part of Phase One of the Biden-Harris Administration's Environmental Justice Scorecard.

Justice40 Initiative

As part of President Biden's [Justice40 Initiative](#), the federal government is working toward the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments reach disadvantaged communities that are marginalized and overburdened by pollution and underinvestment. In particular, the President's Justice40 Initiative applies to federal investments that address climate change, clean energy and energy efficiency, clean transit, affordable and sustainable housing, training and workforce development, remediation and reduction of legacy pollution, and the development of critical water and wastewater infrastructure.

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This Phase One Scorecard provides an update on initial progress made by **the Department of Commerce (DOC)** in implementing the Justice40 Initiative. Future versions of the Environmental Justice Scorecard will provide additional information and updates on the benefits of Justice40 covered programs.

For more information on DOC's Justice40 covered programs, please contact climate-dataandservices@noaa.gov.

Phase One Scorecard metrics and highlights in Fiscal Year 2022 include:

- **2** Justice40 covered program(s)
- **2** funding announcement(s) covered under the Justice40 Initiative
- **Approximately \$15 million** in funding made available from Justice40 covered programs¹
 - The Urban Heat Island Mapping provides funding as technical assistance.
 - The Community Climate Studies program provides funding as technical assistance via cooperative agreements.
 - The Climate Adaptation Partnerships Program held a competition for regional collaborative research and community engagement teams to build capacity for climate adaptation, and to support collaborative planning activities. The funding announcement encouraged partnerships to build capacity in disadvantaged communities.

¹ This funding amount describes examples of the funding that was made available in Fiscal Year 2022 through Justice40 covered programs. The amount does not represent the total funding that benefits disadvantaged communities. The funding was made available through grants, notices of funding opportunity, and other funding announcements. These funding announcements were from Justice40 covered programs that were funded through discretionary and mandatory appropriations, as well as supplemental appropriations, such as those enacted under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (Pub. L. 117-58). The Justice40 Initiative sets a goal that 40 percent of overall benefits from certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities.

DOC's Highlights

Additional efforts at DOC also advance the goals of the Justice40 Initiative. For example, the Minority Business Development Agency invested \$37 million in its national network of 88 business centers, primarily located in disadvantaged communities that are densely populated with minority-owned businesses.

Environmental and Civil Rights Protection

DOC's Highlights

The Economic Development Administration (EDA), as part of its Equity Impact Investments award, invested in a substantial partnership for transformative impact to advance equity in economic development and address environmental justice issues. This project focuses on inclusive economic growth to ensure that disadvantaged communities, women, and other underserved communities are a core part of regional economic growth and prosperity. Partner organizations will work with community-based and economic development organizations to: address barriers that keep community building organizations and economic development districts and economic development organizations from building meaningful partnerships; improve the capacity of organizations supporting disadvantaged communities and other underserved populations, to help increase the number of successful funding applications from organizations that meet community needs and enhance the ability of EDA grantees to serve underserved populations and disadvantaged communities.

In addition, DOC's Minority Business Development Agency recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Transportation to promote opportunities for minority-owned firms to engage in electric vehicle charging station supply chains and the construction of roads, bridges and other transportation construction-related projects that support environmental justice initiatives.

Federal agencies are advancing environmental justice by carrying out their responsibilities under the law to identify and address disproportionate and adverse public health and environmental, climate-related, and cumulative impacts on communities with environmental justice concerns. Agencies are working to ensure that all communities experience the protection of our country's bedrock environmental laws. The following information reflects some of the environmental and civil rights work **the Department of Commerce (DOC)** has done from January 2021 to September 2022.

For more information, please visit [DOC's Strategic Plan](#) .

National Environmental Policy Act

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires federal agencies to consider and disclose the environmental, health, and community impacts of certain decisions or actions before taking them. Environmental reviews help ensure the public is informed about potential actions, and give communities an opportunity to participate in the government's decision-making process. Environmental reviews also ensure that federal

agencies consider ways to protect and enhance public health and the environment, and advance environmental justice in their decision-making. The following information highlights some work **the Department of Commerce (DOC)** has done from January 2021 to September 2022.

Phase One Scorecard metrics and highlights include:

- NOAA's NEPA procedures contain general information about considering environmental justice in the NEPA process. NOAA's regional and program offices have standardized informal policies and practices to consider environmental justice in the NEPA process, such as: consideration of Executive Order 12898, templates that include environmental justice definitions, and partnering with other agencies on environmental justice analyses and translating materials into appropriate languages. Additionally, the National Marine Fisheries Service developed a draft Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy that includes NEPA process information.
- **Yes, NOAA had** project modification(s) where environmental justice concerns were raised during the NEPA process
 - For example, during the development of the Louisiana Trustee Implementation Group Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Project, environmental justice considerations and community input shaped components of stewardship and mitigation efforts. Funding was incorporated in the proposed project's final budget to address impacts to fisheries, impacts from storm surge, construction-related physical disruption to community access, and access to culturally sensitive areas. Community liaisons have been funded for near- and long-term engagement between the project and the communities affected.

Centering Environmental Justice in Decision-Making

Federal agencies work to ensure that the voices, perspectives, and lived experiences of communities are heard and reflected in the priorities, policies, and decision-making of the federal government. Agencies also take steps to respect Tribal sovereignty and ensure government-to-government consultation on federal policies. The following information highlights work **the Department of Commerce (DOC)** has done from January 2021 to September 2022 to center environmental justice in its decision-making.

Community Input and Engagement

Phase One Scorecard metrics and highlights include:

- **2** technical assistance outreach event(s) in Fiscal Year 2022
 - National Integrated Heat Health Integration System (NIHHIS) UHI Campaign was featured in a White House Open Innovation Forum, highlighting equitable partnerships
 - NIHHIS also runs a Urban Heat Island (UHI) Mapping Results webinar every fall to announce outcomes and recruit more applicants for the following summer
- **50** public process(es) related to environmental justice, e.g., requests for information or listening sessions

- NOAA held Climate and Equity Roundtables as listening sessions for the public.
- NOAA sought early input and public comment on the NOAA Fisheries' Draft Equity and Environmental Justice Strategy via virtual meetings.
- NOAA hosted public presentations during Fishery Management Council meetings, including Advisory Panel meetings, and many in-person public meetings throughout the U.S. territories, including meetings with local governments, various fisheries' stakeholders, and cultural organizations.

Consultation and Partnership with Tribal Nations

Phase One Scorecard metrics and highlights include:

- Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), roughly \$3 billion will continue to be provided to NOAA over 5 years to prepare for and mitigate changes to fisheries, threatened and endangered species, and coastal communities. Significant levels of competitive funding were set aside for Tribal efforts related to restoring Tribal priority fish passage (\$60 million) and established regional ocean partnerships (\$5.6 million). Furthermore, the Pacific Salmon Coastal Recovery Fund, a competitive grant program for Tribes and states to protect, conserve, and restore salmon and steelhead populations and their habitats, also received a substantial increase in available funding from the BIL.
- **5** Tribal Consultation(s) related to environmental justice from January 2021 to September 2022
 - In January 2022, NOAA held two consultations on NOAA's existing "Procedures for Government-to-Government Consultation with Federally Recognized Indian Tribes and Alaska Native Corporations" and "Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK)" best practices. The purpose of these consultations was to seek feedback from Tribal Nations on potential updates to NOAA procedures and guidance where appropriate. In June 2022, the NOAA Tribal team completed a review of written and verbal comments on NOAA's consultation procedures.
 - In May 2022, NOAA held a National Seafood Strategy Tribal Consultation. NOAA's National Seafood Strategy is a suite of support actions, constituting the National Strategy for U.S. Seafood Resilience and Competitiveness. Through this strategy NOAA intends to address various resilience challenges of the seafood industry and communities, focusing on actions that NOAA can accomplish in the next five years given current capabilities. The Tribal consultations focused on the four objectives of the proposed seafood strategy, highlighted the interconnected nature of different seafood segments, and reiterated the need to have resilience and growth in wild-capture fisheries, aquaculture and supply chains.
 - In February 2022, NOAA hosted two listening sessions and an open comment period on "Tribal Input on Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Tribal Provisions" to receive feedback from Tribal Nations to help direct three Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provisions (Fish Passage, Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, and Regional Ocean Partnerships). NOAA then released a response document: "NOAA Executive Summary and Response" in May 2022.

Institutionalizing Environmental Justice

Since the start of the Biden-Harris Administration, federal agencies have been working to embed environmental justice into all aspects of their work, including by implementing [Executive Order 12898](#) and [Executive Order 14008](#). The following information shares some of the work **the Department of Commerce (DOC)** has done from January 2021 to September 2022 to institutionalize environmental justice.

Phase One Scorecard metrics and highlights include:

- **Has** an environmental justice strategic plan that **has not been** updated in the past 5 years
- **2** tool(s) or resources to advance environmental justice
- **41** staff that work on environmental justice, either in a full- or part-time capacity
- **2** internal training(s) for staff on environmental justice
- **No** new or strengthened office(s) on environmental justice
- **2** new or strengthened internal working group(s), steering committee(s), council(s) on environmental justice
- NOAA serves as a member of the White House Environmental Justice Interagency Council, which was established in Executive Order 14008.

DOC's Highlights

DOC has an environmental justice subcommittee of its equity council, and NOAA has an internal working group on environmental justice. In addition, NOAA's Fisheries Office of Habitat worked with the Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Environmental Justice to offer employees training covering environmental justice, including best practices and tools.

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