EPA Open Government Progress Report: Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 of FY2014

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- Visit Challenge.gov to see the current status of EPA challenges; FY2014 highlights include:
    - National Aquatic Resource Surveys Campus Research Challenge
    - 2014 TRI University Challenge
    - Climate Change in Focus
    - ToxCast Chemical Data Challenges and Release

Opportunities for Transparency, Participation, and Collaboration
- Over the past 4 quarters EPA offered many ways for the public to get informed and involved including:
    - Numerous blog conversations on Greenversations (http://blog.epa.gov/blog/)
    - 18 published speeches by the Administrator, including remarks at the 14th National Conference and Global Forum on Science, Policy, and the Environment
    - 14 congressional hearings and one (1) EPA congressional testimony posted on EPA's Newsroom website

Greater Transparency: Expanding and Improving Data.gov Inventories

Expanded Access to EPA Data Assets
- EPA doubled the number of records at Data.Gov from just under 1,700 to over 3,400.
- EPA began building an Enterprise Data Inventory of 4,100 entries.

Making More Data Available

Enterprise Information Management Policy (EIMP)

- EPA continued to develop the Enterprise Information Management Policy. Extensive outreach was conducted Agency-wide in order to gain acceptance of the policy. Several drafts of the EIMP were developed and distributed for informal Agency-wide reviews. All comments were captured, evaluated, and reflected in each successive draft of the policy. EPA also developed drafts of the Cataloguing Information Resources Procedure and the Minimum Metadata Standards as essential components of the greater EIMP.

Environmental Dataset Gateway (EDG)

- EPA redesigned multiple EDG processes to better satisfy Open Data Initiative requirements. This included working with EPA's CIO and data stewardship network to issue a major data call across all of EPA's Program Offices and Regions. The data call led to a dramatic increase in the number of datasets catalogued in EPA's Enterprise Data Inventory.

Pollution Prevention: Inventory of U.S. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Sinks from 1990-2012 Released

- EPA tracked the national trend in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and removals back to 1990.
    - In 2012, U.S GHG emissions totaled 6,526 million metric tons CO2 Eq.
    - U.S. emissions decreased by 3.4% from 2011 to 2012

Public Data Access Tools: Releases and Recognitions

- EPA launched new and improved existing web tools, allowing the public to more easily search and view environmental data, including:
    - Developer Central: To aid developers, EPA has established a centralized list of API's in the API Showcase, including data sources in a Data Showcase.
    - Chemical Data Access Tool: As of April 2014, EPA has released a total of 138 declassified documents under its Voluntary Declassification Challenge Program.

Partnering Across Government and Industry

EPA and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Partner to Help Communities Become More Flood Resilient

- EPA released a new tool to help communities prepare for, withstand, and recover from floods. The Flood Resilience Checklist offers many strategies for communities to consider, such as conserving land in flood-prone areas. The Checklist was released with a new report, "Planning for Flood Recovery and Long-Term Resilience in Vermont: Smart Growth Approaches for Disaster-Resilient Communities", the product of a year-long partnership between EPA and FEMA to help communities recover from Tropical Storm Irene.

EPA Supporting Small Businesses by Advancing Sustainable and Innovative Products

- EPA announced funding for 21 small businesses in 14 states to develop and commercialize sustainable technologies to address current environmental issues.

eRulemaking Program Write API go-Live

- The eRulemaking program went live with the Regulations.gov Write API, currently available to federal partner agencies. The innovative feature allows the public to submit comments directly into FDMS.gov for agency review and posting on Regulations.gov.

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OpenGov Plan 3.0 – New and Expanded Flagship Initiatives

EPA Released Version 3.0 of the Open Government Plan
- The Plan was released on June 2, 2014 and defines all the new and expanded Open Government initiatives EPA will undertake from 2014-2015.

Community Engagement Flagship Initiative
- Highlights of EPA's Flagship efforts, in varying stages of progress, are provided via links below.
- To support sharing experiences internally and externally, EPA captured benefits, lessons learned, and other qualitative information for many of its Flagship efforts, which will be updated as flagships conclude.

Flagship: The Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO)
- EPA's Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) website, recognized as a model of transparency, is the go-to resource for information about environmental inspections, violations, and enforcement actions for more than 800,000 EPA-regulated facilities. ECHO currently provides answers to 2 million queries per year regarding environmental regulatory compliance and enforcement data.
- Over the past year, EPA has worked to modernize and improve the system, to publish information sooner, and make more data available on data.gov. Echo2.0 includes various new search features and is expected to be fully functional by early 2015.

Flagship: AirNow Supporting Collection by Public Scientists
- The AirNow program provides the public with real time air quality data and forecasts by collecting data from state, local, tribal and federal agencies. The system reaches the public through both digital content (e.g. the website, smartphone apps, and a free email service) as well as traditional media outlets (e.g. weather and media companies supplying data to print, television and internet media providers)
- AirNow will soon collect emergency air quality data during wildfires and prescribed burning episodes.

Participation and Collaboration

Participation Initiatives
- EPA encouraged the public to comment on various environmental laws, actions, and programs, including:
  - The proposed cleanup plan for Housatonic River "Rest of River Project"
  - Enhancing Transparency for Chemicals and Mixtures Used in Hydraulic Fracturing
  - The Action Plan for Re-Powering America's Land
  - Hazardous Waste Management in the Retail Sector
- EPA awarded Omaha Healthy Kids Alliance a grant for Grassroots Latino Environmental Education.
- EPA Launched an improved Citizen Science website with resources to conduct scientific investigations in communities.
- Three state capitals received green design assistance – Lansing, MI; Madison, WI; Olympia, WA – to develop designs for greener, healthier, and more vibrant neighborhoods.
- EPA selected 18 grantees for $3.6 million in environmental job training grants to provide unemployed residents with job opportunities in the environmental field.

EPA Collaborations

- EPA partnered with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to issue updated advice for fish consumption, which encourages pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers to eat fish low in mercury.
- EPA recognized Oak Ridge, Tennessee as the first Southeast city to take part in EPA's National Green Power Communities Initiative.
- U.S. EPA, Environment Canada, and the Mexico Ministry for Environment and Natural Resources awarded $1.2 million in grants under the Council of the Commission for Environmental Cooperation (CEC) North American Partnership for Environmental Community Action (NAPECA) Program.
- EPA collaborated with the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of Labor in a work group to respond to the President's Executive Order 13650: Improving Chemical Facility Safety and Security. The Work Group focused on 5 specific thematic areas: Strengthen Community Planning and Preparedness, Enhance Federal Operational Coordination, Improve Data Management, Modernize Policies and Regulation, and Incorporate Stakeholder Feedback and Develop Best Practices. The report includes an aggressive Action Plan focused on changing the national landscape of chemical facility safety and security with long and short term priority actions.
- EPA selected Tennessee State University and University of South Carolina as two of the six academic partners of the 2014 TRI University challenge to find new uses for toxics data.
  - The University of California Los Angeles, Drew University, South-Eastern Louisiana University, and the State University of New York at Plattsburgh were also selected.
  - The project is designed to explore ways to raise awareness and provide communities with information about industrial toxic chemical releases into the air, water, and land.
- EPA recognized The Home Depot as the 2013 WaterSense® Partner of the Year for Promoting Water Efficiency.

Leveraging Partnership and Technology – FOIA and FOIAonline

FOIAonline

- FOIAonline is a shared solution developed by EPA and Partner agencies to assist in the receipt and processing of public requests submitted under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).The application provides the public with access to FOIA requests and records made available by Partner agencies. Users can now file requests to multiple agencies from a single site.
- In FY2014, FOIAonline grew from an initial partnership of 5 agencies to 8 with more slated to join.
- By the end of FY14, the public could access over 200,000 requests and nearly 400,000 publically released records.

Strengthening Quality: EPA Quality Assurance (QA) Field Activities Procedure

- EPA released the Quality Assurance (QA) Field Activities Procedure, which supports implementation of EPA's Quality Policy.
- The Quality Policy's primary focus is implementation, oversight, and support of the Quality Program that applies to environmental data collection, production, and use.
- The procedure provides a comprehensive, coordinated approach for consistent implementation of the EPA Field Operations Group Operational Guidelines for Field Activities (FOG Guidelines).