



Good Neighbor Environmental Board (GNEB) Meeting
Call-in number 1-866-299-3188; conference code 2022330068
August 26, 2016

MEETING SUMMARY

Welcome and Overview of the Agenda

Ann-Marie Gantner, Acting GNEB Designated Federal Officer (DFO), Federal Advisory Committee Management Division (FACMD), Office of Administration and Resources Management (OARM), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); Paul Ganster, Chair, GNEB

Ms. Ann-Marie Gantner, Acting GNEB DFO, welcomed the participants, thanked them for attending, and conducted the roll call. A list of meeting participants is included as Appendix A. Following the roll call, Ms. Gantner announced that the Office of Diversity, Advisory Committee Management and Outreach is now known as FACMD (Federal Advisory Committee Management Division), and has a new director, Ms. Monisha Harris. Ms. Harris introduced herself, noting that she looks forward to working with GNEB, which enhances communication between border communities and federal agencies to address sustainable growth issues. Mr. Michael Hardy, who recently was named the Acting Deputy Director for OARM, introduced himself and then stressed the importance of communicating the beneficial work that EPA's Federal Advisory Committees perform. His plan is to develop a communications strategy to increase the visibility of this work.

Mr. Mark Joyce, Associate Director of FACMD, thanked the GNEB members for their work on the report, which would be discussed during the teleconference.

Ms. Gantner introduced Dr. Paul Ganster, GNEB Chair, who welcomed the new EPA staff members and thanked the participants for attending the meeting and working on the report. The current draft has been edited so that it is consistent with the narrative that was sent to the Board members previously. The narrative was meant to provide structure, form and guidance for the various sections so that the report explores how U.S.-Mexico border communities can partner with existing federal agencies to build sustainable communities in the face of climate change. The report also provides recommendations for federal agencies to work better with border communities to increase local resilience in the face of climate change. She noted that recommendations for state and local agencies are not within the purview of the report.

GNEB members should focus on call-out boxes, references, illustrations and targeted recommendations about what actions federal agencies can take with existing resources to help local communities. The report has been reorganized, with existing text moved into two new chapters. The final chapter regarding vulnerable populations and environmental justice is incomplete, but these topics are important. The contractor will edit the report for grammar, punctuation and style, so Board members should focus on substantive, content edits.

Ms. Gantner reviewed the timeline for completion of the report. A meeting for the GNEB to approve the report has been scheduled for October 14, 2016. All text, charts, references, images, comments and so forth must be incorporated into the report by the end of September, if not sooner. Therefore, all of these elements must be received by Friday, September 9, 2016. Board members must use the "Track Changes" feature of Microsoft Word to record their changes and comments in the report labeled "v5 clean version." It is important that references be added where necessary. Members also should ensure that references they

previously provided are in the correct location within the report. Missing references should be added in comment boxes rather than inserted into the text.

Public Comments

Ms. Gantner called for public comments. No oral or written comments were offered.

Discussion of Integrated Draft Report

General Discussion

Dr. Margaret Wilder, University of Arizona, thought that the “take-away” message from each section needed to be clarified. She also noted that the recommendations currently are inconsistent and need to be introduced in a consistent format. Dr. Keith Pezzoli, University of California, San Diego, agreed and added that the role of science must be made clear in the report as well. Science literacy will be important in moving forward on climate change at the federal level. One of the recommendations of the report may be to reinforce the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) efforts to promote science literacy around climate change and also to reinforce the role that research universities play in assisting the federal framing of science literacy.

Dr. Ganster said that science literacy could be added to the existing structure of the report, including the addition of statements that reinforce the role of science and science literacy within the context of current federal agency climate change efforts. Dr. Pezzoli thought that this could be added to Table 2, which discusses NOAA’s U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit. Dr. Ganster agreed, noting that a scientific literacy recommendation could be added to Chapter 1. Dr. Jeff Payne, NOAA, commented that the connection between science and mitigation measures, tools and capacities is an avenue that GNEB should be clear and explicit about. On a related note, current statements in the report regarding projections include footnotes with a description of the underlying methodology used to determine these projections.

Dr. Wilder agreed with these points of view, noting the existence of strong physical and social science on climate change in the border region. The majority of models show the same projections and trends for the border region. GNEB must be completely transparent and careful about the language used in the report. Dr. Ganster asked Drs. Wilder, Pezzoli and Payne to help ensure that the report takes these issues into consideration. Dr. Payne said he had scrutinized Chapter 1 from this point of view. Dr. Wilder commented that several sections of the report are redundant. She thought that it would be helpful to include all information about the physical science of climate change into Chapter 1 with later chapters then referring back to Chapter 1. Ms. Carol Battershell, U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), heartily agreed with this suggestion. This would make it easier for external experts to review a smaller section of the report.

Dr. Ganster asked all of the GNEB members to keep these points in mind when they review the report so that the science does not need to be repeated in each chapter. Mr. Steve Niemeyer, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, concurred with this suggestion. He thought that basic, empirical statements about climate change should be included at the beginning of the report to strengthen it and address the doubts of those who do not believe in climate change. Mr. Jose Angel, California Regional Water Quality Control Board, thought that the report might become too beleaguered if it overemphasized the fact that climate change exists. Ms. Edna Mendoza, Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, suggested that statements of overwhelming support of the science of climate change should be included in the report. Dr. Payne expressed concern with the idea that GNEB might express value judgments by including empirical information that may change depending on the domain in which the research is done.

Dr. Pezzoli noted that the question is not whether climate is changing but rather the degree to which climate change is anthropogenically driven; the important message is the urgency with which changing climate must be addressed, regardless of the cause. Dr. Wilder agreed; science can be included in the report that illustrates that the change is occurring without necessarily pointing to the causes of the change. Dr. Payne agreed. Chapter 1 currently describes climate change without being burdened by the causes, anthropogenic or not. Drs. Wilder, Pezzoli and Payne and Mr. Niemeyer will focus on this during their reviews of the report.

Mr. Joyce asked the GNEB members to consider the following question: If the Board planned to remain neutral regarding anthropogenic causes of climate change, why does the report advocate for anthropogenic changes to help mitigate climate change? A GNEB member responded that regardless of whether an individual believes in climate change or not, it is possible to engage in activities that benefit the environment such as energy conservation. This should be reflected in the report. Another GNEB member explained that the state of Texas' point of view is that climate change should be characterized as climate variability.

Ms. Mendoza asked about the process for states that need to recuse themselves. Mr. Joyce and Ms. Gantner explained that a statement will be added to the report detailing the recusals.

Ms. Laura Abram, First Solar, Inc., thought that Chapter 1 provided a good summary of the issues, but she noticed that some sections of this chapter were described in such detail that it created redundancies in the remainder of the report. Ms. Battershell noted the previous discussion about providing a detailed structural foundation in Chapter 1 so that later chapters could just refer back to Chapter 1, and it would be easier for external experts to review a single chapter. The Board members agreed that scientific details should be included in Chapter 1 and the redundancies, which were noted by several Board members, be removed from later chapters. It was suggested that data be consolidated, and all members would consider this as they review the report.

Specific Line Items in the Report

The following specific items were identified by GNEB members during the teleconference. The members responsible for addressing the issues are identified in the action items.

- Chapter 1, page 8, lines 8–9: “Graywater infrastructure” will be restored to “gray infrastructure.”
- Chapter 1, page 9, line 19: The sentence regarding cost of electricity does not make sense and must be checked.
- Chapter 1: Based on a discussion of the state of Texas being penalized for Mexico burning coal supplied by a permitted Texas coal mine, the Board agreed to develop a broad recommendation on improving binational coordination to address transborder environmental issues such as these.
- Chapter 2: Text on DOE activities related to climate change and the U.S.-Mexico border will be included via track changes.
- Chapter 2: Text on the pending North American Development Bank (NADB) and Border Environment Cooperation Commission (BECC) merger will be added, including clarifying the differences in how NADB/BECC refer to gray and green infrastructure. Information about the merger should be known before the report is submitted.
- Chapter 2, page 15, lines 12–13: Text should be added explaining the Border Liaison Mechanism.

- Chapter 2, page 19, line 14: Include tribes in the sentence.
- Chapter 2, page 20, lines 17–20: Include an explanation regarding the Federal Highway Administration’s (FHA) method for determining emissions estimates.
- Chapter 2, page 20, lines 24–26: Clarify the text on nonattainment and add text regarding Nogales.
- Chapter 2, page 20, lines 27–28: The instances of “PM_{2.5}” should be changed to “PM₁₀.”
- Chapter 2, page 25: Recognition of the structure of *colonias* versus other types of municipalities should be included.
- Chapter 2, page 25: A recommendation regarding Clean Power Plan implementation and how it applies to border communities will be added to the DOE section to the point that it can be developed considering the uncertainty regarding the plan.
- Chapter 2, page 25: Because the United States and Mexico already have agreed to coordinate on transborder environmental issues, a specific recommendation will be added regarding Mexican coal burning as a source of air pollution in the U.S. border region.
- Chapter 3, page 8, lines 14–16, and page 9, lines 2–9: Language on transportation will be added.
- Chapter 3, page 33, lines 8–9: The accuracy of the statement regarding the cost of electricity must be verified.
- Chapter 3, page 36, lines 15–18: A reference regarding the solar photovoltaic case study must be added and the information verified.
- Chapter 3, page 37: A recommendation regarding transportation infrastructure and flooding will be added.
- Chapter 4, page 40, lines 11–15: The text regarding emissions estimates and the methodology used should be clarified.
- Chapter 4, page 41: Text regarding the pilot joint inspection program in Nogales, which has decreased wait times, will be added, as long as data are available to prove that there have been beneficial environmental effects.
- Chapter 4, page 41, Table 6: The appropriate reference will be added.
- Chapter 4, page 43, line 1: “San Luis, Texas” will be changed to “San Luis, Arizona.”
- Chapter 4, page 46: Because it is a significant concern of border communities, a recommendation regarding increasing staffing and efficiency at ports of entry will be added.
- Chapter 5: Text detailing the efforts of the state of Texas to promote renewable energy will be added to the chapter. Information about efforts in each of the border states could be added.
- Chapter 5, page 48, lines 16–23: The statements regarding climate change, grid stability and power blackouts (e.g., greater demand, reduced efficiency) will be verified and clarified.
- Chapter 5, page 57: A recommendation on carbon 1 and carbon 2 will be added.

- Chapter 5, page 57: A recommendation or call-out box regarding the federal role in promoting renewable energy generation (e.g., microgrids) will be added.
- Chapter 5, page 57: A recommendation regarding Property-Assessed Clean Energy programs will be added.
- Chapters 5 and 6: Ms. Mendoza will provide a substantive editorial review of these chapters from a DOE perspective.
- Chapter 6, page 62, lines 8–20: The text regarding the scope of Zika virus spread and occurrence will be revised, including the acknowledgment that information about the virus is changing rapidly. Appropriate references and an updated map will be added.
- Chapter 6, page 66: A section on community stability will be added.
- Chapter 6, page 67, Section 6.11: The section on food security does not include appropriate references and, as currently drafted, is not within the scope of this report. This section will be revised and appropriate references added while ensuring that the issue is framed in terms of climate change.
- Chapter 7: Text framing the issues for disadvantaged communities will be added. For example, tribal communities are disproportionately affected by climate change because of their reliance on subsistence living and the cultural importance of certain natural resources.
- Chapter 7: Information on children’s environmental health conferences in the context of climate change and border communities will be added.
- Acknowledgements: GNEB members will provide their acknowledgements (including name, title and affiliation) to Ms. Gantner, copying Mr. Joyce.
- Recommendations: Previous GNEB reports have been rich in recommendations; however, this report is lacking in this respect. Additional, specific recommendations should be identified that focus on short- to medium-term actions that federal agencies can take using existing resources to help border communities deal with the effects of climate change. The recommendations can encourage federal agencies to communicate the actions that they are taking so that efforts are not duplicated and can be coordinated/leveraged among agencies. Recommendations should be characterized in terms of needs and a description of the actions that federal agencies can take to address these needs. Additionally, the White House Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) can help to coordinate federal efforts focused on the U.S.-Mexico border on receipt of this report.
- The National Climate Assessment IV will be commencing soon, so this report is timely and will be foundational to how the assessment will be conducted.

Discussion of Report Topics for 2017

Mr. Joyce explained that the time has come in the cycle to meet with CEQ and prepare for the December meeting, at which the Board will convey the current report. Discussions also will occur regarding the topic for the next GNEB report. Although CEQ provides the final mandate to the Board, GNEB in previous years has prioritized two to three consensus, high-priority topics about which the members can provide insightful, useful recommendations and advice to the federal government. Any GNEB members with ideas for potential topics should send their suggestions to Ms. Gantner, Dr. Ganster and Mr. Joyce.

Dr. Ganster noted that a current challenge is communication between and among federal agencies regarding issues that affect border communities. A related issue is communication with Mexico's agencies to build effective working relationships. Progress has been made in this area, but increased coordination (e.g., management of binational watersheds) is needed. The next report could focus on how federal agencies can better coordinate their activities in the border region and also improve coordination with their counterparts in Mexico. A GNEB member agreed, noting that implementing communication systems is critical. Dr. Teresa Pohlman, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, also agreed and would like to hear U.S. Department of State input on the topic because the State Department has the lead on issues related to the border region. Ms. Beverly Mather-Marcus, U.S. Department of State, commented that several interagency workgroups exist that deal with border issues, but most coordinated efforts focus on infrastructure rather than environmental topics. She is not aware of an interagency workgroup focused on border environmental topics.

In response to a comment by Dr. Pohlman regarding a CEQ workgroup (Southwest Border Interagency Working Group) that apparently now is defunct, Dr. Ganster suggested that GNEB recommend that the group be institutionalized and reconvened. Dr. Pohlman agreed, noting that the Board has presented to this group in the past.

Mr. Joyce commented that the Border 2020 initiative includes working groups comprising representatives from various federal agencies and counterpart agencies in Mexico. A GNEB member added that Border 2020 was established primarily to address border environmental issues and was intended to be an interagency effort. The effort in Mexico has been better organized as a result of Mexico's federal organization around environmental issues, but coordination of the U.S. effort has been less successful.

Dr. David Eaton, The University of Texas at Austin, noted that communicating information is critical to coordination, and communication efforts should be operationalized. Information is not always readily available, and there is no excuse for this given available technology. The Board should make recommendations regarding the operationalization of communication. Another GNEB member agreed, adding that a recommendation should focus on building an information infrastructure. In terms of placing this in a border context, the federal government recently convened the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine to examine the transition to sustainability. A resulting 15-year retrospective indicated that data are available but not easily accessible. Building information infrastructure in the border region is critical and a natural next step of the federal effort.

Next Steps

Ms. Gantner outlined the next steps for GNEB to complete the report, explaining that Dr. Jenny Lee, The Scientific Consulting Group, Inc. (SCG), had captured a list of action items, which would be sent via email to the Board members no later than Tuesday, August 30, 2016. The list of action items also is included below.

GNEB will meet to discuss and approve the report on Friday, October 14, 2016. A quorum of Board members is needed; alternate members are not eligible to vote on GNEB business.

Mr. Joyce reiterated that Board members must provide their comments on the report and all related items no later than Friday, September 9, 2016. SCG will incorporate all of the comments so that the report can be ready for review by the Board members by the end of September. Ms. Gantner reiterated that photos and references are needed.

In response to a question from a GNEB member, proxy votes cannot be sent via email; members must be present at the October teleconference to vote.

Adjournment

Dr. Ganster thanked the GNEB members for their input during the teleconference. The meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m. EDT.

Action Items

- The GNEB members were asked to complete the following by September 9:
 - **Text changes.** Send additional comments and suggestions on the draft report (clean version 5) to EPA using track changes.
 - **Photographs.** Send photographs with credits to EPA.
 - **Tables.** Send tables to EPA with reference cited, if applicable.
 - **Acknowledgments.** Send additional acknowledgments to EPA.
 - **References.** Provide missing references in the sections members authored.

- The GNEB editing team volunteered to complete the following by September 9 (Note: Page and line numbers refer to clean version 5. The individuals who volunteered to write and/or review specific edits are indicated in parentheses):
 - Science/scientific integrity. Add text on the role of science and scientific literacy in climate change resilience (Authors: Keith Pezzoli, Jeff Payne).
 - Science literacy references. Send to EPA (Keith Pezzoli).
 - Anthropogenic origin of climate change. Add a sentence indicating that irrespective of whether climate change is anthropogenic, climate change is a concern in the border region (Author: Jeff Payne; Reviewers: Margaret Wilder, Keith Pezzoli, Steve Niemeyer).
 - Chapter 1, page 9, lines 18–20. Check the accuracy of the text (Laura Abram, Carol Battershell).
 - Chapter 1, page 8, lines 8–9. Edit the text (Lisa LaRocque).
 - Chapter 1, page 9, lines 18–20. Check accuracy of the text (David Eaton).
 - Chapter 1. Add a broad recommendation on improving federal coordination (Paul Ganster).
 - Chapter 2. Provide text on Department of Energy activities (Carol Battershell).
 - Chapter 2. Provide text on the pending NADB-BECC merger (Sam Coleman).
 - Chapter 2, page 15, lines 12–13. Revise text to explain the Border Liaison Mechanism (EPA Region 6).
 - Chapter 2, page 8, lines 8–9. Add reference to section 3.2, green infrastructure (Author: Lisa LaRocque; Reviewer: Keith Pezzoli).
 - Chapter 2, page 20, lines 17–20. Add text on FHA method for determining emissions estimates (Sam Coleman).
 - Chapter 2, page 20, lines 24–26. Clarify text on nonattainment and add text on Nogales (Sam Coleman).
 - Chapter 2, page 25, lines 4–15 (recommendation 1). Rewrite the text (Sam Coleman).
 - Chapter 2, page 25. Add a recommendation regarding the Clean Power Plan (Cyrus Reed, Sam Coleman).
 - Chapter 2, page 25. Add a recommendation regarding Mexican coal burning as a source of air pollution in the U.S. border region (Steve Niemeyer, David Eaton).
 - Chapter 3, page 33, lines 8–9. Check accuracy (David Eaton).
 - Chapter 3, page 36, lines 15–18. Add a reference (Laura Abram).
 - Chapter 3, page 37. Add a recommendation on transportation infrastructure and flooding (Edna Mendoza).
 - Chapter 3, page 8, lines 14–16. Add language on transportation (Edna Mendoza).
 - Chapter 3, page 9, lines 2–9. Add language on transportation (Edna Mendoza).
 - Chapter 4, page 40, lines 11–14. Clarify (Sylvia Grijalva—not in attendance).
 - Chapter 4, page 41. Add text on the pilot joint inspection program in Nogales (Teresa Pohlman).

- Chapter 4, page 41, Table 6. Add a reference (Teresa Pohlman, Sylvia Grijalva).
 - Chapter 4, page 46. Add a recommendation on increased staffing at ports of entry (Edna Mendoza, Teresa Pohlman).
 - Chapter 5. Provide text on Texas efforts to promote renewable energy (Steve Niemeyer).
 - Chapter 5, page 48, lines 16–23. Clarify (Laura Abram, Carol Battershell).
 - Chapter 5, page 57. Add a recommendation on carbon 1 and carbon 2 (Jeff Payne).
 - Chapter 5, page 57. Add a recommendation on the federal role in promoting renewable energy generation (Carol Battershell).
 - Chapter 5, page 57. Add a recommendation regarding PACE programs (Cyrus Reed).
 - Chapters 5 and 6. Provide editorial review (Edna Mendoza).
 - Chapter 6, page 62, lines 8–20. Reword the text regarding the scope of Zika virus spread (David Eaton).
 - Chapter 6, page 66. Add a section on community stability (Lori Navarette, Teresa Pohlman).
 - Chapter 6, page 67, lines 4–7. Rephrase and add a reference (Author: Keith Pezzoli; Reviewer: David Eaton).
 - Chapter 6, page 67, lines 14–18. Rephrase and add a reference (Author: Keith Pezzoli; Reviewers: David Eaton, Teresa Pohlman, Rebecca Palacios).
 - Chapter 6, page 67, lines 22–26. Revise (Rebecca Palacios).
 - Chapter 7. Provide a draft chapter regarding framing issues for disadvantaged communities (Keith Pezzoli).
 - Chapter 7. Provide information on children’s environmental health conferences (Sam Coleman).
- EPA will:
 - Distribute via email the revised draft to the GNEB members for review on October 3.
 - Remind the GNEB members of the October 14 meeting to approve the report.
 - SCG will complete the following by September 23:
 - Incorporate all changes approved by the Board during this meeting (page 8, lines 8–9: correct; page 19, line 14; page 20, line 27; page 20, line 28; page 43, line 1).
 - Add missing references that are not provided by the GNEB members by referring to previous draft chapters.
 - Copyedit new text from the Board members using track changes.
 - Delete or move to Chapter 1 all descriptions of climate science in Chapters 2 through 7, adding references to Chapter 1, where appropriate, using track changes.
 - Eliminate duplicate text, using track changes.
 - Ensure that English units are used with metric equivalents in parentheses, using track changes.

Appendix A: Meeting Participants

Chair

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Appendix B: Meeting Agenda



Good Neighbor Environmental Board

Agenda

Friday, August 26, 2016

12:00 – 4:00 p.m. EDT

Call-in: 866-299-3188, conference code: 2022330068

12:00 – 12:15 p.m.	Welcome and Overview of the Agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ann-Marie Gantner, Acting Designated Federal Officer Office of Diversity, Advisory Committee Management and Outreach• Paul Ganster, Chair Good Neighbor Environmental Board• Board introductions
12:15 – 12:30 p.m.	Public Comments
12:30 – 2:45 p.m.	Discussion of Integrated Draft Report
2:45 – 3:30 p.m.	Discussion of Report Topics for 2017
3:30 – 4:00 p.m.	Next Steps <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Missing information—assignments, due dates• Pictures, graphs, charts, etc.• Next meeting—Friday, October 14, 12:00–4:00 p.m. (EDT)
4:00 p.m.	Adjournment