Modernizing EIA Implementation in the United States

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Vancouver, British Columbia

The Task Force

- Career civil servants
- Over 600 substantive comments
- Interviews with federal practitioners
- Other sources

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Reviewed current practice in:

- Technology & information management
- Federal & intergovernmental collaboration
- Programmatic analysis & tiering
- Adaptive management & monitoring
- Categorical exclusions
- Environmental assessments

Milestones

Report Issued September 2003

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Roundtables held
October 2003 – January 2004

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Chair of CEQ will determine next steps.
Decision expected Summer 2004

Task Force Priority Recommendations

#1   Categorical exclusions

#2   Environmental assessments

#3   Federal & interagency collaboration

#4   Programmatic analysis & tiering

#5   Adaptive management

Categorical Exclusions

- Clarify and promote consistent practices for:
  - Development
  - Documentation
  - Public review
  - Approval
  - Use

Environmental Assessments

- Recognize the broad range in size of EAs
- Size should be commensurate with magnitude and complexity of :
    - Environmental issues
    - Public concerns
    - Project scope

Environmental Assessments, cont.

- Describe minimum requirements for short EAs
- Clarify requirements for:
    - Public involvement
    - Alternatives
    - Mitigation

Federal & Interagency Collaboration

- Training for government agencies
- Guidance & templates
- Training for the public
- "Citizen's Guide to NEPA"

Programmatic Analysis & Tiering

- Clarify different uses
- Clearly define uses and appropriate:
  - Scope
  - Range of issues
  - Depth of analysis
  - Level of description required in documentation

Adaptive Management

- Develop pilot study
- Provide guidance
- Link with environmental management systems

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