

Justice Department, EPA launch environmental justice strategy

May 9, 2022 at 5:00 AM

Attorney General Merrick Garland and EPA Administrator Michael Regan revealed on May 5 a partnership to advance environmental justice. The strategy includes creating a new Office of Environmental Justice, establishing a comprehensive environmental justice strategy, and reviving an important enforcement tool. The plan addresses goals established in President Biden's Executive Order Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/27/executive-order-on-tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad/>).

With these plans, the Justice Department (DOJ) will launch the Office of Environmental Justice within DOJ's Environment and Natural Resources Division. The new office will coordinate with DOJ's existing divisions and will examine the environmental justice impacts of investigations.

The plan also includes a comprehensive environmental justice enforcement strategy to guide the DOJ's work. The strategy will help the administration harness an array of legal tools to advance environmental justice.

Finally, DOJ also announced plans to publish an interim final rule restoring its ability to use supplemental environmental projects, or SEPS, which allow violators to carry out EPA-approved projects in exchange for lower fines. Under the program, for example, a polluter might agree to pay for air quality monitors in a city where it was out of compliance with air pollution rules.

Back to *May 9, 2022* (<https://www.amwa.net/monday-morning-briefing/may-9-2022>)

Source URL: <https://www.amwa.net/article/justice-department-epa-launch-environmental-justice-strategy>