

## **2024 DoD EJ Strategy: Draft Goals and Overall Approach**

**BLUF:** The Department of Defense (DoD) has drafted the following goals in response to Executive Order (EO) 14096, “Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All.” EO 14096 requires DoD to submit an Environmental Justice (EJ) Strategy by October 2024 to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ). In addition to these goals, DoD will define how to frame EJ and related analysis within the Department, which is included under the second goal.

### **Goals:**

- Regularly assess EJ-related plans, policies, programs, and actions across all DoD programs after first educating and expanding EJ awareness of actions disproportionately impacting low income, minority, Tribal, disabled, and/or descendant populations across all DoD programs.
- Identify, characterize, and assess effects of DoD plans, programs, policies, and activities disproportionately impacting communities and stakeholders, including whether effects are chronic or acute.
- Investigate methods to mitigate impacts of DoD plans, programs, policies, and activities after first identifying potentially affected communities and stakeholders.
- Provide tools to improve DoD’s capacity to conduct meaningful and effective work supporting EJ.
- Strengthen outreach to communities and stakeholders that may be disproportionately affected by high and adverse environmental, human health, or cultural impacts from DoD programs, policies, and activities through appropriate public engagement.

### **Overall Approach to Addressing EJ**

The Department anticipates it will need to execute a considerable amount of work to effectively integrate EJ across the enterprise to meet EO 14096. Historically, DoD has used compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, National Historic Preservation Act, and Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act processes to address EJ. DoD may take a more proactive approach by incorporating EJ into Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), Military Department (MILDEP), and installation-level planning processes. These plans may include or discuss installation master planning, climate change, cultural and natural resources conservation, integrated installation resilience, and others. Integrating EJ into the Department’s policies and programs will require consistent coordination across OSD, the MILDEPs, individual installations, and other DoD equities. DoD may investigate methods to streamline EJ implementation, including:

- Issuing a Secretary of Defense or Deputy Secretary of Defense message, discussing the importance of EJ and explaining CEQ’s EJ guidance;
- Designating a Chief EJ Officer for each MILDEP;
- Coordinating with the MILDEPs and DoD Components on the best methods to integrate EJ into existing programming, planning, acquisition, and other actions;
- Issuing a DoD Directive, Instruction, and/or Manual, describing consistent EJ implementation across all programs and services and identifying actions better managed at the OSD-level versus the MILDEP- and installation-levels;
- Developing EJ training and communication materials for DoD leadership; and
- Beginning integration of available EJ tools into planning documents.