COMMUNICATION STRATEGY FOR BORDER 2020
February 2013

Effective communication is critical to the success of the U.S.-Mexico Environmental Program: Border 2020, a program in which border stakeholders, and federal, state and local governments collaborate to identify and discuss environmental and public health protection in the border region. Therefore, through this Communication Strategy Border 2020 will emphasize the importance of communication so that border stakeholders are well informed, engaged, and committed to Border program activities.

In order to maintain an efficient and effective communication strategy, two audiences (internal and external) were identified. **Internal Communication** is defined as the exchange of information amongst Border 2020 participants: National Coordinators offices, Policy Fora, Regional Workgroups, task forces, U.S. Border Tribes and Mexico Indigenous Communities, and other partners. **External Communication** is defined as the dissemination of information geared towards the external audience including federal and state organizations not directly involved with Border 2020, potential stakeholders, academia, the private sector, the general public, and others interested in Border 2020 progress, success and activities.

It is important to note that even though the implementation of this guidance is recommended to help with the program's general communication, it is not all-inclusive. Each coordinating body, especially at a Regional/local level, can later adapt theses strategies (or develop its own communication approach or individual strategy) to address its particular needs.

COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
The communication strategy will be led by the Border 2020 National Coordinators, represented by the Office of International and Tribal Affairs (*OITA*) in EPA and the International Affairs Coordinating Unit (*UCAI*) in SEMARNAT. They will coordinate and implement the communication strategy with Program representatives and stakeholders, by establishing a **Communication Advisory Committee**. The National Coordinators will make sure that the information related to the program's progress and successes is shared and made public in a timely manner, and that messages are bi-national, consistent, and uniform.

Communication Advisory Committee Tasks
1. Identify bi-national issues requiring the attention of the National Coordinators and/or other participants in the program.
2. Maintain close collaboration with Border 2020 operational staff to maximize communication opportunities within the program.
3. Publish Border 2020 successes using at a minimum, the following tools: EPA and SEMARNAT websites, email databases, press releases and progress reports. In addition, it may be necessary to identify venues and public events to share program progress and activities.
4. Ensure that the communication is in English and Spanish (reports, agendas, press releases, meetings, etc.).
5. Identify tools to better communicate internally and externally.

INTERNAL COMUNICATION

Objective:
The objective is to promote effective and timely communication that will allow for a successful Border 2020 Program. This will be accomplished through close collaboration with key stakeholders and keeping the public informed about program progress. This strategy aims to facilitate a more efficient and effective Border 2020 Program.

The internal Border 2020 audience includes Border 2020 participants: National Coordinators offices, Policy Fora, Regional Workgroups, task forces, U.S. Border Tribes and Mexico Indigenous Communities, and other partners.

The following mechanism provides the basic components to promote effective **"internal"** communication among the Border 2020 Program partners, a responsibility of the Communication Advisory Committee.

Mechanism for effective internal communication
- With the information provided by Policy Fora, Regional Workgroups, and Taskforces, the committee should ensure that meeting agendas and minutes/notes are published in EPA and SEMARNAT websites.
- Produce and distribute the Joint Communiqué for the Border 2020 National Coordinators biennial meetings.
- Coordinate and distribute Reports on Program progress and successes.
- Coordinate conference calls and/or *webinars*, as appropriate, among the coordinating bodies (EPA/SEMARNAT), Policy Fora, Regional Workgroups, and other partners to discuss specific and/or short-term issues not related to the normal activities of the Policy Fora and Work Groups.
- Attend Policy Fora, Regional Workgroup, and Taskforce meeting, based on available resources.
- Update the Border 2020 websites: (www.epa.gov/border2020) (http://www.semarnat.gob.mx/temas/internacional/Paginas/Regional.aspx) or those designated by the program.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION

Objective:
To meet the communication needs of border communities and other interested parties in an efficient and timely manner and communicate Border 2020 progress. The external audience includes federal and state organizations not directly involved with Border 2020, potential stakeholders, academia, the private sector, the general public, and others interested in Border 2020 progress, success and activities.

The Border 2020 program external communication will complement ongoing communications of the Policy Fora, Regional Workgroups and Task forces, in which representatives from the community, civil organizations, academia, private sector, and the public, can present environmental issues specific to the border region, and consider ideas to increase program efficiency and effectiveness.

To reach the external audience, the Communication Committee will take advantage of the Policy Fora, Regional Workgroups and Task force meetings, to include a public comment period in their respective agendas, to get input from stakeholders and the public. These opportunities for public dialogue should not interfere with the time required to fulfill scheduled program activities

The following mechanism provides the basic components to promote effective **"external"** communication among the Border 2020 Program partners, a responsibility of the Communication Advisory Committee.

Mechanism for effective external communication
- Provide border communities and other external partners with thorough, clear, objective, concise, and pertinent information related to Border 2020 policies, programs, and initiatives;
- Ensure that the Border 2020 public meetings and events are announced at least **15 days** in advance;
- Communicate results to the public and the media, in a timely and clear manner to ensure that Border 2020 is widely recognized;
- Utilize different ways to communicate Border 2020 information to border communities and interested parties, including press releases, press reports, and the posting of information on EPA and SEMARNAT websites;
- Identify additional communication needs as the Border 2020 program is implemented to periodically consider ongoing Border 2020 policies, programs, and initiatives;
- Respond in a timely manner to requests for information on Border 2020;
- Ensure that Border 2020 staff provides timely and effective communication to border communities and interested parties;
- Increase efforts to involve elected federal, state and local public sector representatives to Border 2020 meetings and events; and
- Highlight Border 2020 efforts in SEMARNAT'S Annual Activities Report and EPA's Annual Report.

BORDER 2020 COMMUNICATION PLAN
The following tables provide the schedule of communication activities to be implemented by the National Coordinators, the Regional Offices, and the Policy Fora. These activities are not all-inclusive and each group is encouraged to augment and complement the current list with additional tools and materials as deemed appropriate by the respective program or office. While the designated lead office is responsible for the implementation and delivery of each communication activity, many of these deliverables are related to other sources and will often require the input and review of each group. This list may be subject to change given the priorities of the National Coordinators and the lead offices.

National Coordinators (EPA/SEMARNAT)				
Type of Communication	**Purpose of Communication**	**Audience**	**Lead**	**Minimum Frequency**
National Coordinators Meeting	Engage public, update, inform, discussions	All Stakeholders	OITA/ SEMARNAT	Biennial
Joint Communiqué	Statements of NCM proceedings and commitments	All Stakeholders	OITA,UCAI, NPMs, Regions	Biennial
Border 2020 Media products (press releases, advisories)	Broadcast news, updates and event information	Media, all stakeholders	SEMARNAT, OITA	Periodic, as needed
Program Co-Chair U.S. National Coordinator Video Call	Internal items	OITA, NPMs R6, R9	OITA	Bi-annual
Border 2020 Program Conference Calls/ Communication with Program Partners	Discuss specific Border 2020 Program issues as needed	OITA, NPMs, R6, R9, States, Tribes	OITA	As Needed
Border 2020 Fact Sheets	Communicate progress on goals and objectives	All stakeholders	SEMARNAT, OITA	As needed
Border 2020 Webcasts (where available)	Broadcast live events and speeches to coordinated groups	All stakeholders	SEMARNAT, OITA, R6, R9	At meetings and events as needed
Border 2020 ListServs (BECNET & others)	Communicate news, request feedback, update, survey	All stakeholders	SEMARNAT, OITA, R6, R9	Periodical and updated as needed
Border 2020 Website	Communicate all program information and links	All Stakeholders	OITA, R6, R9	Periodic Updates
SEMARNAT Border 2020 Website	Communicate all program information and links	Border residents	SEMARNAT	Periodic Updates
Border 2020 Highlight Reports	Report on Border 2020 accomplishments	All Stakeholders	SEMARNAT, OITA, R6, R9	2015, 2018
Border 2020 Mid-term Progress Reports	Assessment of Border 2020 goals and objectives and possible refinement	All Stakeholders	SEMARNAT, OITA, R6, R9	Mid-term 2016

EPA Regions 6 & 9				
Type of Communication	**Purpose of Communication**	**Audience**	**Content Lead**	**Minimum Frequency**
Border 2020 Highlights Reports	Share program goal progress	All stakeholders	SEMARNAT, OITA, R6, R9	Bi-annual (2015, 2018)
Border 2020 Program Regional Workgroup, coordination	Engage partners, action planning	Border 2020 Regional Workgroup and Task Force Co-chairs	R6, R9	As needed
Regional Border 2020 Newsletters	Project updates, goal progress	All Stakeholders	R6, R9	Bi-annual
Press Releases	Broadcast news, updates and event information	Media, all stakeholders	R6, R9	As needed
Action Plans	Identify priority projects/activities	All Stakeholders	SEMARNAT, OITA, R6, R9	Biennial
Regional Workgroup and Task Force Meetings	Engage public, update on progress, and share information. Communicate meeting announcements, summaries, and outcomes.	All Stakeholders	R6, R9	RWGs – Annual Task Forces – As Needed

Policy Fora (US-Mexico Co-chairs and leads)				
Type of Communication	**Purpose of Communication**	**Audience**	**Lead**	**Minimum Frequency**
Annual Forum meetings (Virtual, phone or face-face)	Engage public, update goals, and inform. Communicate meeting announcements, summaries, and outcomes.	All Stakeholders	Policy for a Co-Chairs	Annual, as needed
Conference/Video Calls/Web Posting	Communicate updates, news and deliverables	Border 2020 Partners	Policy Fora	Every Six Months
Action Plans	Identify priority projects/activities	All Stakeholders	Policy Fora	Biennial