



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

No. SOLTA-C-23-005

October 16, 2023

BORDER 2025

U.S.-Mexico Border Environmental Program



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October 16, 2023

1.0 OVERVIEW

The North American Development Bank (NADB) is requesting proposals from eligible applicants (**Section 3.0**) for projects addressing the “Priority Areas” (**Appendix 1**) being solicited to achieve the Goals and Objectives of the U.S.-Mexico Border 2025 Program (Border 2025 Program) in the Texas-New Mexico-Chihuahua and Texas-Tamaulipas-Nuevo León-Coahuila region. For purposes of the Border 2025 Program, the border region is defined herein as that area within 62.5 miles (100 kilometers) of either side of the U.S.-Mexico border.

Eligible applicants must submit project proposals by December 4th, 2023, directly to NADB as specified in **Section 5.0** of this RFP. Proposals are due at **6:00 pm (Central Standard Time)**.

The complete list of the Priority Areas can be found in **Appendix 1**.

2.0 BACKGROUND

The U.S.-Mexico Border 2025 Program (Border 2025) is a binational collaborative effort established by both countries to protect human health and the environment in the border region. The Border 2025 Program continues to target and focus on underserved communities that may be disproportionately impacted by environmental risks in the U.S.-Mexico border region. To review background information on Goals and Objectives of the Border 2025 Program refer to the Program web page: <http://www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder>

The NADB is an international organization created in 1993 pursuant to the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States concerning the establishment of a North American Development Bank. Among its purposes, the NADB helps preserve, protect, and enhance the environment of the border region to advance the well-being of the people of the United States and Mexico. To carry out projects that focus on Border 2025 goals and objectives, the NADB receives grant funding from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The NADB in turn issues subawards/subgrants (also referred to as Technical Assistance Agreements [TAAs]) and oversees the receipt and review of TAA proposals, coordinates project selection, issues and manages TAAs including managing the implementation of projects and monitoring project performance. The TAA is the legal document that will formalize the agreement between the applicant and the NADB for project funding.

If selected for funding, applicants will be required to comply with certain federal regulatory and policy requirements and other terms and conditions of the TAA.

3.0 THRESHOLD ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The selection process includes a preliminary assessment to determine if the applicant fulfills the threshold eligibility criteria as required by this RFP and specified below. **Project proposal applicants must meet the following threshold eligibility criteria to be considered for funding:**

- A. Each proposal must identify the organization that will sponsor the project. The following groups may apply for funding:
- U.S. non-governmental organizations registered as 501 (c)(3) organizations.
 - Mexican non-governmental organizations that have a CLUNI (Clave Única de Inscripción) registration number.
 - U.S. and Mexican local and state governmental agencies.
 - Colleges and universities.
 - U.S. Federally recognized tribes; and
 - Mexican indigenous communities.

For-profit entities will not be considered for funding

- B. The NADB's contribution with EPA funds to each TAA will be no more than \$75,000 per eligible project. Proposals that request more than \$75,000 will not be considered for funding.
- C. To be considered, the proposal must address at least one of the Priority Areas described in **Appendix 1**.
- D. Proposals will not be accepted if the focus of the proposed project is construction or rehabilitation.
- E. **Funding opportunity description and statutory authority** - The statutory authority for the award of the TAAs under this RFP includes Section 104(b)(3) of the Clean Water Act; Section 103 of the Clean Air Act; Section 20 of the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA); Section 8001 of the Solid Waste Disposal Act; and Section 102 (2)(F) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and Section 203 of the Marine Protection Research Sanctuaries. These authorities restrict the use of funds to conducting or promoting the coordination and acceleration of research, investigations, experiments, training, demonstrations, surveys, and studies relating to the causes, effects (including health and welfare effects), extent, prevention, reduction, and elimination of water pollution air pollution, adverse health effects of the release into the environment of material present in solid waste, and funding for pest management/monitoring. Projects that are demonstrations must involve new or experimental technologies, methods, or approaches. NADB expects that the results of the project will be disseminated so that others can benefit from the knowledge gained in the demonstration project.
- **Implementation projects are not eligible** for funding under this RFP. A project that is accomplished through the performance of routine, traditional, or established practices, or a project that is simply intended to carry out a task rather

than transfer information or advance the state of knowledge, however worthwhile the project might be, is not considered a demonstration project.

- F. If the applicant is leveraging in-kind funds and/or services in its proposal, it must provide **Letter/s of Acknowledgement** and/or **Commitment** from any entity that is contributing additional leveraged resources to the proposed project. Projects that leverage resources may improve their scoring under the evaluation criteria of this RFP.
 - The letter must mention the quantity and type of in-kind resources that will be provided for the proposed project.
 - All letters of acknowledgement must be submitted **electronically with the application** (in PDF format) with a signature from the entity providing the leveraged support. **In limited circumstances, when e-mail is not an option**, you may fax your letters along with your application to Briselda Duarte, NADB Project Manager at (915) 209-7863.

- G. Late proposals **submitted after 6:00 pm (Central Standard Time) on Thursday, December 4th, 2023**, will not be considered for funding.

- H. Proposals must substantially comply with the proposal submission instructions and requirements set forth in **Section 6 (PROPOSAL PREPARATION INFORMATION)** or else they will be rejected.

- I. Project proposals must clearly describe outputs and outcomes (for definitions of outputs and outcomes view **Appendix 2**). Projects in Mexico must explain the direct and measurable U.S.-side benefits.

- J. For projects that have a binational component that require subcontracting an entity that is in the other country, the Sponsor must have financial and administrative mechanisms in place and agree to comply with the applicable federal regulations to subcontract these entities to not delay the implementation of the project. Sponsors must confirm in writing that they have these mechanisms in place, or their proposals will not be considered. Verify by providing confirmation from your legal and/or financial administrative area that these mechanisms exist.

4.0 TIMETABLE FOR RFP PROCESS THROUGH PROJECT SELECTION

The RFP opening date is **Monday October 16th, 2023** and interested applicants will be able to access the RFP on the NADB’s web page, (www.nadb.org), on this date

4.1 Schedule and Process

<u>October 16, 2023</u>	The RFP is issued for the Texas-New Mexico-Chihuahua and Texas-Tamaulipas-Nuevo León-Coahuila U.S.-Mexico border region, which is 100Km/62.5 miles on each side of the border. The NADB will answer any general inquiries (e.g., administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal; clarify threshold eligibility criteria) on the RFP process from
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	<p>interested applicants but will not provide informal comments on draft proposals or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria.</p>
<p><u>October 2023</u></p> <p><u>RFP</u></p> <p><u>Workshops & Webinars</u></p>	<p><u>ALL WEBINARS</u> After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.</p> <p><u>WEBINARS:</u></p> <p>Webinar 1 – (Spanish Only). Thursday, October 26, 2023 Time: 9:30 am – 11:30 am (Mountain Daylight Time) / 10:30 am – 12:30 pm (Central Daylight Time)</p> <p>Registration link: https://usepa.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJlsc6hqjluGwrYkn8c_CJukWYp6SJphDo</p> <p>This webinar will be recorded and posted on the NADBank RFP webpage</p> <p>Webinar 2 – (English Only). Friday, October 27, 2023 Time: 9:30 am – 11:30 am (Mountain Daylight Time) / 10:30 am – 12:30 pm (Central Daylight Time)</p> <p>Registration link: https://usepa.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vJlscO6rqT4sH0Inb40b8y-j0e2kB-ysk7c</p> <p>This webinar will be recorded and posted on the NADBank RFP webpage</p> <p><u>IN PERSON WORKSHOPS ONLY:</u></p> <p>1) In person workshop Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua: Monday, October 30, 2023 Time: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Local Time (Spanish only)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Museo de Arqueología El Chamizal Parque público El Chamizal 1 Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua</p> <p>2) In person workshop El Paso, Texas: Wednesday, November 1, 2023 Time: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Local Time (English & Spanish with simultaneous interpretation)</p>

	<p style="text-align: center;">City of El Paso Environmental Services Department 7968 San Paulo Dr. El Paso, Texas 79907</p> <p>3) In person workshop Eagle Pass, Texas: Tuesday, November 7, 2023 Time: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Local Time* (English & Spanish with simultaneous interpretation)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">International Center for Trade 3295 Bob Rogers Dr. Eagle Pass, Texas 78852</p> <p>4) In person workshop in Laredo, Texas: Wednesday, November 8, 2023 Time: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm Local Time* (English & Spanish with simultaneous interpretation)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">City of Laredo / Joe A. Guerra Public Library Multipurpose Room, 1120 E. Calton Rd. Laredo, TX 78401</p> <p>5) In person meeting in Weslaco, Texas: Thursday, November 9, 2023 Time: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm. Local Time* (English & Spanish with simultaneous interpretation)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">City of Weslaco, Legislative Chamber 255 South Kansas Avenue Weslaco, TX 78596</p> <p>*Please note time change in the United States</p>
<p><u>December 4th, 2023, 6:00 PM (Central Standard Time)</u></p>	<p>Deadline for receipt of project proposals.</p>
<p><u>January 28, 2024 (Approx. date)</u></p>	<p>Notification to applicants of proposal selection results. Selected applicants must submit a work plan within 30 Calendar days of notification.</p>

5.0 PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL INFORMATION

- 5.1 NADB's main point of contact for this RFP is Briselda Duarte, Interagency Project Manager, (PM) bduarte@nadb.org.
- 5.2 Inquiries concerning this RFP may only be submitted by e-mail to the PM prior to the proposal due date (see 4.1).
- 5.3 Proposals must be submitted via email or fax to the PM **by December 4th, 2023, no later than 6:00 PM Central Standard Time.**
- 5.4 Applicants are strongly encouraged to **confirm receipt with the PM of their proposal before the deadline. Late proposals will not be accepted.**

6.0 PROPOSAL PREPARATION INFORMATION

6.1 Proposal Format

- A. All proposals must be written in Microsoft Word (preferably using Times New Roman) with a format of at least 1" margins and size 12 font. **Do not submit proposals in PDF format or in ZIP files.**
- B. Proposals must not exceed 5 single-sided pages, not including a required excel budget spreadsheet, the standardized cover page and any Letter/s of Acknowledgement as explained in **Section 6.2.C**. Please note **excess pages will not be reviewed.**
- C. Project proposals shall be in either English or Spanish. Applicants should prepare proposals in their preferred language.

6.2 Submittal of Proposals

- A. Applicants shall submit project proposals with a cover page that clearly identifies the RFP number **SOLTA-C-23-005** title of project, and the name and address of the applicant that is submitting the proposal.
- B. When e-mailing or faxing proposals for submission, include the following in the Subject Line of your transmission: **"Solicitation No. SOLTA-C-23-005"; title of project and name of applicant.**
- C. In addition to the coversheet, the proposal itself should include the following information:
1. Project title:
 - Must clearly describe the project.
 - Must indicate location of the project.Title should not exceed 10 words.
 2. Legal name of applicant's organization or institution, name and title of main point of contact, location address, phone number and email address of

applicant's organization. If applicant is a non-profit organization, include non-profit status, i.e., 501(c) (3) and/or CLUNI registration number.

3. Brief statement of how project accomplishes the Priority Area(s).
4. Project description should clearly identify the following:
 - Purpose and goal of the project.
 - Benefits to the public or environment (e.g., how will the project improve the environment and/or public health, and how many people are estimated to directly benefit by the project's outputs/outcomes).
 - The outputs and outcomes used to reach measurable environmental results and how those results will be measured. (**Appendix 2** for examples).
 - Long-term sustainability (explain how this project will sustain itself after Border 2025 funding runs out).
 - Leveraging of resources (e.g., in-kind resources, committed partnerships, applicant funds, and other sources of funds).
 - A project timeline (in table or chart format) outlining how the project will be completed within 12-15 months from signing of the TAA.
 - Brief explanation of qualifications/expertise of staff implementing the project.
5. Estimated project budget (e.g., salaries, breakdown of sub-contract cost, travel, equipment, supplies, leveraged resources, etc.). **Budget and cost amounts must be submitted in U.S. dollars.** Please provide estimated funds needed (i.e., requested Border 2025 funds, leveraged funds and total amount). Projects that leverage resources may improve their scoring under the evaluation criteria of this RFP.
 - The funds to be allocated under this RFP are not intended for the exclusive purpose of purchasing general equipment, construction of facilities, and/or other rehabilitation of infrastructure. Please refer to **Section 3.D.**
 - Applicants that require the purchase of equipment as part of the project proposal will need to clearly identify equipment in the proposed budget and explain its purpose and how it will benefit the overall project. **Note: equipment purchases should not exceed \$10,000.**
 - Projects with a minor construction activity will be considered if the principal intent of the project is to resolve an environmental or public health issue.

In the interest of dedicating as much resources as possible to the project for the environmental and human health benefits in the communities involved, applicants should maintain their indirect cost rate within

reasonable levels. The indirect cost rate may be subject to limits set by this funding program or, in the absence of this requirement, the negotiated IDC cost rates with their cognizant federal agency will be respected.

6. Projects that entail data or samples collection and their analysis will likely require a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP), and therefore will require additional time and cost.

We recommend that this additional time and cost be already factored into the proposal. An approved QAPP is needed prior to starting data collection and/or sampling activities. The QAPP is required to ensure that the data is collected, preserved, analyzed, and interpreted appropriately. For general information about QAPP please go to:

- For QAPP:
 - Quality Assurance Project Plan Standard - Directive No: CIO 2105-S-02.0 - <https://www.epa.gov/irmpoli8/quality-assurance-project-plan-qapp-standard> . QAPP Standard FAQs: https://www.epa.gov/system/files/documents/2023-07/OEIP_QAPP_Standard_FAQs_07212023.pdf
7. Project sponsors are encouraged to use Geographic Information Systems (GIS), where applicable, to enhance a project's impact.
 - GIS and other mapping tools such as EJSCREEN, <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>, can be used to display and analyze data to further understanding of environmental and public health challenges (historical, current, and projected conditions or more complex spatial analysis). These tools can also be used to demonstrate baseline conditions or project outcomes.

- The application of GIS can be incorporated within project implementation and project sponsors are encouraged to coordinate, where applicable, with binational counterparts to enhance border wide data.

- Environmental Justice Tool

For all submissions we strongly encourage the use of EPA's [EJSCREEN](#) and/or data tools from other sources (i.e., Climate and Justice Economic Screening Tool ([CJEST](#)), EnviroAtlas, studies, census, and third-party reports, etc.) to characterize and describe the environmental justice issues in the target community, as well as demographics, geographic location, and persistent environmental challenges. *For projects implemented in Mexico*, data from neighboring U.S. sister city can be considered to give a more complete picture of the impacted communities and populations.

7.0 PROPOSAL EVALUATION, SELECTION AND AWARD

- 7.1 Projects will be reviewed and evaluated based on completeness and how directly they address the evaluation criteria referenced in **7.4, Project Criteria for evaluation of proposals**.
- 7.2 Once projects are selected for funding, the NADB will provide the applicant with instructions on the next steps. In general, after notice of award and submission of an acceptable work plan, the NADB will issue a TAA for Border 2025 funding. It is recommended that selected project sponsors report project results at the appropriate Border 2025 Task Force(s) meetings.
- 7.3 Project sponsors will be required to provide performance reports and invoices on a quarterly basis.

7.4 Project Criteria for evaluation of proposals

		Max Points	Comments
1.	Fulfills Border 2025 Priorities (Priority Areas)	17	
A	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on how well they address one or more of the identified priority areas within Border 2025 (Objectives and Sub-objectives) as described in Appendix 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If addressing more than one objective, proposal must explain connection between the two priorities must be identified. Clearly identify the goal and objective and how it benefits the community. 	5	
B	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on how the project will effectively address the disproportionate and adverse human health, environmental, climate-related, and other cumulative impacts on disadvantaged communities which may include communities of color, low-income communities, and tribal and indigenous communities. See Appendix 3</p> <p>B.1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For more information about environmental justice: (5 points) https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice For Mexican Projects may also refer to https://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5596232&fecha=07/07/2020 (5 points) <p>B.2 Describe how the project is actively engaging the community in the development or in the implementation of the project. (For example, such as attendees, participants, or decision makers) (5 points)</p>	10	

		Max Points	Comments
C	<p>The projects will be evaluated on their inclusion of climate change (mitigation and adaptation). For more information see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • https://www.epa.gov/climate-change • https://www.epa.gov/arc-x/strategies-climate-change-adaptation 	2	Mitigation reduces the effects of climate change. Adaptation is outlining efforts to address climate change
2.	Institutional Coordination and Leveraging	15	
A	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on the quality and extent to which they demonstrate specifically the role(s) other entities will play to support the proposed project activities (e.g. Supporting documentation demonstrating coordination with key identified federal, state, tribal, and/or local agencies is required; letters of support for project proposed in community. Supporting documentation will include: 1) General letter of support from Key partner/stakeholders. 2) General description of specific partners roles and activities. 3) Detailed letters of support with roles and activities plus what resources and leverage amount they bring</p>	10	
B	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on the degree that proposed budget leverages other resources.</p>	5	
3.	Project Design	38	
A	<p>Proposals will be evaluated based on the degree that project proposals clearly identify:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. Project team members have clear roles identified and are coherent with their field of expertise (3 points) II. Applicant clearly has the experience and qualifications to undertake the project successfully (2 points) III. Project management (planning, implementation, and evaluation) is linked to specific tasks and/or activities that are feasible to implement. Applicant identifies key steps to achieve project objectives, including a clear description of the activities or components and the anticipated products/results associated with each activity. The applicant should articulate a realistic milestone/activity schedule, including timeframes (up to 18 points) IV. Tasks are logically linked to the outputs/outcomes proposed (3 points) V. Budget breakdown is realistically linked to the tasks proposed and scheduled with milestones 	38	Appendix 2 for more information on Outputs and Outcomes.

		Max Points	Comments
	<p>identified. Reasonable and allowable costs for each component/activity. (10 points)</p> <p>VI. Applicant identified their approach, procedures and controls for ensuring that awarded grant funds will be expended on time (2 points).</p>		
4.	Outputs and Outcomes	30	
A	<p>A. Outputs (measurable results) are clearly identified and explained from their baseline and correlated to outcomes. (Up to 10 points)</p> <p>B. Outcomes must reflect the potential solution to the problem identified (describe project outcomes resulting from project outputs.) (Up to 10 points)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See Appendix 2 for detailed information 	20	<p>Considerations: 1) Is the impact of the outcome realistic /feasible; 2) Is it a short-term or long-term outcome; 3) How significant is the outcome? Is the Output a good indicator of the project results?</p>
B	Proposal describes long term sustainability (i.e., the proposal outcomes should identify the means to continue beyond the Border 2025 Program).	5	
C	Binational impact. The project's outputs and outcomes are binational in nature and clearly described (projects in either the U.S. or Mexico must demonstrate indirect and/or direct measurable results to their counterparts in either the U.S. or Mexico). The project must clearly state the benefits to the US community regardless of project location.	5	
	TOTAL POINTS	100	

7.5 Review and Selection Process

Eligible proposals will be evaluated by an evaluation panel made up of NADB and EPA staff. The panel will score and rank the proposals using the evaluation criteria identified in Section 7.4 above. The NADB will make the final funding decisions based on the highest-ranking scores and ranking received from the evaluation panel but may also consider the following other factors: availability of funds, geographic diversity, and distribution of projects across priority areas.

APPENDIX 1: BORDER 2025 – REGION 6 PRIORITY AREAS FOR SOLICITATION

Priorities for the Request for Proposal (RFP) align with Border 2025 Goals and Objectives. These priorities reflect opportunities for measurable and sustainable environmental results in the border region 62.5 miles on either side of the U.S.-Mexico Border according to the 1983 La Paz Agreement.

Priorities can be regionwide or cover a specific geographic area i.e., Texas-New Mexico-Chihuahua and Texas-Tamaulipas-Nuevo León-Coahuila. Competitive proposals will address one or more of the priorities listed below, as well as include key partners. For more information on the Goals and Objectives of the Border 2025 Program, please visit: <https://www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder/border-2025-framework>

Within each Goal(s), Objective(s), Sub-objectives(s), examples of Project Types are provided, however, other Project Types submitted will be considered as long as they address the Border 2025 Program Framework Goal/Objective/Sub-objective.

All proposed projects should address one or more of the environmental priorities outlined below and should include activities designed to engage, educate, and empower communities. The proposed projects should consider the integration of the eleven Border 2025 Program guiding principles within their project development and implementation and must include at least one of the following: novel climate strategies and solutions; prioritizing communities that have been environmentally underserved; and community involvement.

All work plans should include strategies for addressing local environmental health issues related to indoor or outdoor air, water, or waste pollution, and focus on educating and empowering the community about those issues. Projects should highlight the environmental justice concerns within the project area, highlighting these concerns using U.S. EPA’s Environmental Justice Tool (EJSCREEN), Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) and/or any other appropriate resources and approaches that identify the environmental pollution within that community. The project should seek collaboration with other stakeholders (e.g., other community-based organizations, environmental groups, businesses, industry, federal, tribal, state, and local governments, and academic institutions) to realize project goals and objectives and build project sustainability leading to on-going efforts that address the local environmental issue(s).

Goal and Objectives: The following are more specific examples of the types of activities which may be considered for funding under this solicitation within the Goal and Objectives identified within the announcement.

Goal 1: Improve Air Quality

Border 2025 projects under Goal 1 will focus on developing Strategies and measures used to reduce the emissions of conventional air pollutants such as particulate matter may also contribute to reduced emissions of greenhouse gases.

- Types of projects for consideration for funding under this goal and tied to the objectives below include but are not limited to the following:
 - community-led low-cost air quality sensors training, monitoring and public outreach in the binational airsheds (Eagle Pass, Texas-Piedras Negras, Coahuila; Laredo, Texas-Nuevo Laredo, Tamaulipas; Lower Rio Grande Valley communities) or rural communities,
 - community-led air and other pollution monitoring and prevention, that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other air pollutants,
 - community-led air monitoring of diesel emissions from locomotives near or adjacent to neighborhood and/or schools and build partnerships to develop strategies to reduce pollution from these sources,
 - reducing indoor toxics and indoor air pollution,
 - private-public sector partnerships that reduce greenhouse gas and other air pollutants,
 - technical training that promotes standardized approaches for improving air quality,
 - develop and implement strategies to reduce vehicle emissions,
 - conduct workshops to increase freight participation into U.S. EPA’s SmartWay and Mexico’s Transporte Limpio programs.

Objective 1a: By 2023, increase knowledge-transfer and provide at least one training opportunity on performance standards and applications of low-cost air quality sensors.

Objective 2: Increase the quality and exchange of data from emissions inventories across the border and among federal, state, local, Tribal governments and Mexican Indigenous communities and Afro-Mexican people.

Objective 2b: By 2024, expand technical training to promote standardized approaches to emissions inventory development (including source measurement and testing) and maintenance.

Objective 3: Reduce vehicle emissions in the border region, including by establishing or strengthening programs that reduce the number of vehicles that do not comply with vehicle emissions standards.

Objective 3a: By 2024, increase cross-border (interagency, interstate, and international) access to databases that officials can use to verify that used vehicles meet emission standards.

Objective 3c: By 2025, reduce emissions from freight transportation in the border region by increasing information exchange and harmonization between U.S. EPA’s SmartWay program and Mexico’s Transporte Limpio program.

Objective 4: Deploy strategies and technologies to reduce pollutant emissions and improve public health outcomes.

Objective 4b: By 2025, implement at least two policy-based (e.g., multi-pollutant assessment, co-mitigation of short-lived climate pollutants, and Global Methane Initiative) or technology-

based (e.g., renewable energy financing or other incentives) programs targeting specific pollutants or sectoral emissions of local concern.

Goal 2: Improve Water Quality

Watersheds along the U.S.-Mexico border region are shared binationally, with rivers flowing from one country to the other or flowing along the international boundary. Promoting beneficial water reuse and trash-free waters initiatives, reducing marine debris and protecting and restoring water quality in binational watersheds requires sustained collaborative binational, multi-jurisdictional planning efforts and actions. Transboundary pollution poses significant economic and environmental impacts in communities affected by sewage spills conveyed through binational rivers and ocean currents. While historical U.S. and Mexico investments in water infrastructure have improved conditions in many border areas, aging infrastructure and rapid population growth in the border area have resulted in more frequent and larger sewage spills impacting both nations. The Border 2025 Water Goal builds upon the successes and lessons learned from the Border 2020 Program and aims to address the following significant challenges, which are exacerbated by high population growth rates, droughts and natural disasters.

- Types of projects for consideration for funding under this goal and tied to the objectives below include but are not limited to the following:
 - water conservation training,
 - flood mitigation measures,
 - develop and implement a utility-driven water/energy audit that can be used as a model for other areas along the border,
 - implementation of low-cost potable water technology and treatment, with community involvement and outreach,
 - implement projects to prevent and reduce the levels of trash and sediment from entering high priority binational watersheds,
 - strategies to reduce salinity in the Lower Rio Grande,
 - stormwater management.

Objective 4: Promote beneficial reuse of treated wastewater and conservation of water and energy. 100% of Border Water Infrastructure Program projects selected for development will include an assessment of water reuse opportunities, if appropriate by 2025.

Objective 4b: Develop at least one wastewater reuse pilot project, or one utility-driven water/energy audit.

Objective 5: Implement projects to prevent and reduce the levels of trash and sediment from entering high priority binational watersheds. Projects that prevent/reduce marine litter should primarily focus on preventing waste at the source through improvements to solid waste management systems, education campaigns, and monitoring as well as reducing trash from entering the aquatic environment through the capture of litter using river booms in known watershed litter hot spots. Specifically, the Rio Grande watershed.

Objective 6: Improve access to transboundary water quality data. Objective 6d: Continue the work of the binational water quality improvement plan as part of the Lower Rio Grande Water Quality Initiative in the Lower Rio Grande below Falcon International Dam.

Goal 3: Promote Sustainable Materials Management and Waste Management, and Clean Sites

Increased trade, manufacturing, population growth and improperly managed waste results in air, water, and land pollution. To ensure the future health and safety of the communities the program management moves away from a linear approach of make, use, and dispose, to a circular, life-cycle approach, reducing waste and optimizing resource use. By promoting sustainable materials management and resource efficiency practices throughout the border region, provides opportunities for partnerships, innovation, and job creation. Goal 3 of the Border 2025 Program promotes the collaboration at all levels of government, communication with community stakeholders and collaboration with the private sector to apply limited resources to reduce pollution and prevent adding to the legacy contamination in the U.S.- Mexico border region. Improvements to solid waste management and disposal practices are necessary to improve the quality of life and protect the surrounding populations and the environment. Mismanaged waste, especially at open dumpsites can contribute to surface and groundwater pollution near garbage dumpsites, public health threats, and are a health and safety concern.

- Types of projects for consideration for funding under this goal and tied to the objectives below include but are not limited to the following:
 - training for city personnel on waste disposal and separation to reduce landfill fires,
 - strategies to mitigate and prevent illegal dumping,
 - community clean up activities, to include developing strategies with city officials to implement ordinances and/or programs for waste management sustainability,
 - establish and/or expand recycling capabilities,
 - community outreach on illegal dumping, recycling and raise awareness on the principles of a circular economy,
 - identify and measure priority waste streams (i.e., tire waste, e-waste, recyclables, hazardous and solid waste) and establish management strategies that promote circular economy.

Objective 2: Identify priority waste streams and develop sustainable materials management and resource efficiency practices that strengthen their respective market value.

Objective 2a: Identify and measure priority waste streams by 2022.

Objective 3: By 2025, improve knowledge at every level of government (federal, state, local) to improve solid waste disposal site operations.

Objective 3b: By 2025, identify strategies to reduce landfill fires.

Goal 4: Improve Joint Preparedness for and Response to Hazardous Environmental Emergencies

The La Paz Agreement initiated a history of cooperation between Mexico and the United States, the objective of which is to preserve a “healthy environment for the long-term economic and social well-being of the present and future generations of each country, as well as the international community.” The La Paz Agreement establishes the general regulatory framework in which both countries agreed to prevent, reduce or eliminate sources of air, water and soil pollution. After its adoption, five cooperative agreements (Annexes) were established. Annex II of 1985 establishes cooperative measures to prepare for and respond to pollution from hazardous substances. It also defines the need for a Mexico-United States Joint Contingency Plan (JCP) that was developed in 1988 and signed in 1999. To date, the JCP has been updated and signed twice, first in 2008 and most recently in 2017. The JCP provided the basis for the Binational Joint Contingency Plans of the 15 Sister Cities situated along the border. The Emergency Preparedness and Response Policy Workgroup, as well as the Joint Response Team (JRT) is co-chaired in Mexico by the Federal Attorney of Environmental Protection (PROFEPA) under SEMARNAT, and the National Civil Protection Coordination, of the Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection (SSPC), and in the United States by the U.S. EPA Office Emergency Management (OEM). Additional JRT partners include representatives from other U.S. and Mexican federal agencies, including state, tribal and local offices responsible for emergency prevention, preparedness, and response in the border region.

- Types of projects for consideration for funding under this goal and tied to the objectives below include but are not limited to the following:
 - development of community disaster preparedness plans,
 - risk analysis for environmental response,
 - update and test of sister city plans through binational tabletop and/or drill exercises,
 - emergency response personnel binational trainings, workshops, seminars and/or courses focused on prevention and response to emergencies with an environmental impact,
 - binational exercises (tabletop, functional or full scale),
 - binational tabletop and/or drill exercise, purchase of equipment may be considered.

Objective 2: Review, update and evaluate the Sister City Joint Contingency Plans (SCJCPs).

Objective 2a: By 2021, a study of the 15 SCJCPs should be completed utilizing existing risk analysis data. This study must consider, among other aspects, the SCJCP’s content and scope.

Objective 2b: By the year 2022, a joint study should be carried out in the border region aimed at adjusting the number of Border Sister Cities that are members of the JCP.

Objective 2c: Based on the results of the sister city JCP Study, the updated SCJCP’s must be promoted to the corresponding stakeholders (Regional Groups, NADB, etc.) during the Border 2025 Environmental Program. The actions carried out in this objective will be aimed at achieving the update of the 15 SCJCP’s between 2020 to 2025.

Objective 3: Strengthen the training of emergency response personnel through the development of in-person or online training courses by creating a certificate of skills recognized by corresponding authorities. Additionally, develop and disseminate technical support material to help inform the public in case of emergency.

Objective 3a: In coordination with the Regions, a Sister City Training Program should be developed during the year 2021 and implemented throughout the Border 2025 program. The Training Program should focus on course offerings that result in certifications to enhance the competency of emergency responders.

Objective 3c: In order to complement the training opportunities, audiovisual material and online courses focused on prevention and response to chemical emergencies should be made available at the border.

Objective 4: Design and implement the guidelines and protocols to ensure rapid, safe, and legal passage of personnel and materials across the Mexico – United States border in emergency response situations.

Objective 4a: By 2021, an action plan should be developed to address respective liability coverage of each country to facilitate the movement of people and materials across the border during drills or emergency events.

Objective 4b: By 2022, each country should complete a report on the status of transboundary movement of human and material resources during emergencies, as well as the current and future actions that are being carried out.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Certain projects will address multiple goals and objectives these include but are not limited to project types such as the following:

- Environmental health, education, and community outreach on:
 - implementation of a user-friendly bilingual tool for sharing of environmental data (i.e., air quality, water quality, waste, emergency response) and accessibility that allows community members to raise local concerns,
 - pesticides and other toxic substances
 - mitigating climate and health risks from urban heat islands, extreme heat, and wildfire events
- Other – applicant should identify the goal(s) and objective(s) listed within those listed above, if using a project type listed below:
 - mitigation of pollution to improve public health (i.e., air, water, waste),
 - community revitalization planning in support of climate resiliency and adaptation,
 - monitoring of sources of pollution and developing strategies/tool to mitigate these sources,
 - community revitalization planning to address local pollution and promote sustainable greenspaces,
 - research with a demonstration project or community environmental education.

APPENDIX 2: EXPLANATION OF BASELINE, OUTPUTS, AND OUTCOMES

Explanation of Baseline, Outputs, and Outcomes

Background of existing challenges

To understand and solve environmental and public health problems impacting communities one must evaluate the background of the existing challenges. It's critical to strategically identify expected results using a sustainable vision.

Baseline:

A baseline is the original/current condition or set of conditions against which progress, reported as "outputs" can be measured. Baseline (starting point) should be expressed in quantitative and/or qualitative terms.

For example, if a project is focusing on removal of waste, one can ask:

- What is the waste generated by the city annually?
- What is the source and target of the waste and existing conditions?
- How many people will be benefit from project implementation?

Proposal must include Outputs (or project deliverables)

The term "output" means an activity, effort, and/or work product that will be produced or provided over a specific period r by a specific date.

- May be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.
- Proposals must include a description of project outputs and the way in which recipients will track project milestones throughout the grant period.
- Project output examples may include, but are not limited to, number of presentations made, number of participants at an event, and draft and final reports produced.
- Progress reports and a final report will also be a required output.

These outputs may require a baseline.

Outputs Examples:

- A) *Develop and implement a monitoring system for evaluating coastal water quality.*
- B) *Remove 80,000 scrap tires by September 2023 from the local collection center.*

Proposal Must Include Outcomes

The term "outcome" means an environmental result, effect or consequence that will occur from carrying out project activities and/or completing outputs related to an environmental goal. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related, or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. Proposals must include a description of project outcomes resulting from the project outputs, even if the outcome to be achieved is beyond the assistance agreement funding period. Outcomes must reflect the potential solution of the problem identified and can include a baseline (see definition above).

APPENDIX 3: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

The term “environmental justice” (EJ¹), as used in this solicitation, means the just treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, Tribal affiliation, or disability in decision-making and other activities that affect human health and the environment so that people:

- (i) are fully protected from disproportionate and adverse human health and environmental effects (including risks) and hazards, including those related to climate change, the cumulative impacts of environmental and other burdens, and the legacy of racism or other structural or systemic barriers; and
- (ii) have equitable access to a healthy, sustainable, and resilient environment in which to live, play, work, learn, grow, worship, and engage in cultural and subsistence practices.

For purposes of this competition and the evaluation of applications, “disadvantaged communities” may include communities of color, low-income communities, tribal and indigenous communities, and other vulnerable populations such as the elderly, children, individuals with a disability, and those with pre-existing medical conditions within the US-Mexico Border Region (62 miles on either side of the border).

Disproportionate and adverse environmental, human health, climate-related and other cumulative impacts, as well the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts, may result when greater pollution burdens and/or consequences, and the impact of them, are more likely to affect or have affected the underserved communities described in this solicitation. The impacts may result from various factors including but not limited to being a function of historical trends and policy decisions.

Factors that may indicate disproportionate and adverse impacts as referenced above include: differential proximity and exposure to adverse environmental hazards; greater susceptibility to adverse effects from environmental hazards (due to causes such as age, chronic medical conditions, lack of health care access, or limited access to quality nutrition); unique environmental exposures because of practices linked to cultural background or socioeconomic status (for example, subsistence fishing or farming); cumulative effects from multiple stressors; reduced ability to effectively participate in decision-making processes (due to causes such as lack of or ineffective language access programs, lack of programs to make processes accessible to persons with disabilities, inability to access traditional communication channels, or limited capacity to access technical and legal resources); and degraded physical infrastructure, such as poor housing, poorly maintained public buildings (e.g., schools), or lack of access to transportation.

¹ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/04/26/2023-08955/revitalizing-our-nations-commitment-to-environmental-justice-for-all>

For more information on Environmental Justice see this page:
<https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice>

Optional: Environmental Justice Web-based Screening Tool or Climate and Justice Economic Screening Tool.

Applicants are encouraged, as appropriate, to include data from EPA's EJScreen tool, the Climate and Justice Economic Screening Tool (CJEST) and/or other EJ-focused geospatial mapping tools as part of their application to help characterize and describe the affected communities/populations and area(s). Data from other sources (e.g., studies, census, and third-party reports) could also be included to give a more complete picture of the impacted communities and populations. Instructions, resources, and tutorials on how to use EJScreen are included at the hyperlink above.

For more information on Environmental Justice on projects in the Mexican side may also see this page:

https://www.dof.gob.mx/nota_detalle.php?codigo=5596232&fecha=07/07/2020

According to the sectoral program derived from the SEMARNAT National Development Plan 2019-2024 the following topics:

Priority objective 1: Promote the conservation, protection, restoration and sustainable use of ecosystems and their biodiversity with a territorial and human rights approach, considering biocultural regions, to maintain functional ecosystems that are the basis of the well-being of the population.

Priority objective 2: Strengthen climate action to move towards a low-carbon economy and resilient population, ecosystems, production systems and strategic infrastructure, supported by available scientific, traditional, and technological knowledge.

Priority objective 3: Promote water as a pillar of well-being, managed by transparent, reliable, efficient, and effective institutions that ensure a healthy environment and where a participatory society is involved in its management.

Priority objective 4: Promote an environment free of water, air and soil pollution that contributes to the full realization of the right to a healthy environment.