



Office of the Attorney General
Washington, D. C. 20530

May 5, 2022

MEMORANDUM FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENT COMPONENTS
UNITED STATES ATTORNEYS

FROM: THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

SUBJECT: ACTIONS TO ADVANCE ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

Environmental crime and injustice can happen anywhere, but communities of color, low-income communities, and Tribal communities often bear the highest burden of the harm caused by pollution and climate change. Today, I am announcing three actions that will enhance the Justice Department's efforts to secure environmental justice for all Americans.

First, pursuant to Executive Order 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad*, the Associate Attorney General is issuing a comprehensive environmental justice enforcement strategy to guide the work of the Justice Department's litigators, investigators, and United States Attorneys' offices nationwide to advance the cause of environmental justice through the enforcement of federal laws. Developed by the Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD) in partnership with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the strategy will ensure that the entire Department is using all available legal tools to promote environmental justice.

Second, the Justice Department is launching its first-ever Office of Environmental Justice within ENRD. This new Office will be a critical resource for all Department components as they seek to implement the comprehensive enforcement strategy. The new Office will also support environmental justice investigations and litigation and facilitate outreach by the Department to communities with environmental justice concerns.

Third, the Justice Department is issuing an Interim Final Rule that, subject to guidelines and limitations set forth in a separate memorandum I am also issuing today, will restore the use of supplemental environmental projects in appropriate circumstances. For decades before 2017, EPA and ENRD relied upon such projects to provide redress to communities most directly affected by violations of federal environmental laws. For this reason, they are particularly powerful tools for advancing environmental justice.

Each of these actions will strengthen the Department's commitment to ensuring equal justice under law by advancing the cause of environmental justice.