

State Environmental Agency Business Process Improvement Activity 2010-2016: Environmental Council of the States Report Released



Walter Wright, Jr.
wwright@mwlaw.com
(501) 688.8839

Arkansas Environmental, Energy, and Water Law Blog

11/15/2016

The Environmental Council of the States (“ECOS”) has released a report titled *State Environmental Agency Business Process Improvement Activity 2010-2016 (“Report”)*.

ECOS describes itself as a national nonprofit, non-partisan association of state and territorial environmental agency leaders.

The Report notes that state environmental agencies have adopted a variety of Business Process Improvement (“BPI”) methodologies to assist in dealing with “tight budgets” and protect the natural environment in a “more efficient manner.”

ECOS conducted member outreach related to BPI activities. Project information was compiled, and state input on the benefits, difficulties, and opportunities associated with BPI was analyzed and shared in meetings with the United States Environmental Protection Agency, states, and other governmental entities. Also referenced is a trend analysis that was performed using data from a similar inventory of state activity that had been compiled by the organization in 2010.

ECOS states that in 2010 it compiled a list of state environmental agency BPI activities. The organization subsequently undertook a 2016 outreach effort to inventory state BPI projects completed since 2010. As a result, ECOS states that it obtained information on:

- Lessons learned
- Planned projects
- Other BPI themes

A related effort is an online database of 700 completed projects characterized as a state BPI compilation found in an interactive online database. The database can be viewed at www.ecos.org/bpi-projects.

The *Report* addresses what are characterized as “themes” such as:

- The challenges facing agencies hoping to maximize gains from BPI projects
- How to create a culture of continuous improvement
- State-EPA collaboration on BPI

The *Report* is intended to assist states in the improvement of their capacity to realize operational environmental gains through BPI.

The *Report* also notes:

Responses from the states indicate that there has been increased adoption of business process improvement methodology among these agencies; that applying this methodology to streamline routine operations rather than environmental programs is seen as a safe investment during tight budget times; and that there is an opportunity for states and US EPA to jointly execute business process improvement projects applied to their shared regulatory and administrative processes.

Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality Director Becky Keogh serves as an officer in ECOS.

[A copy of the *Report* can be downloaded here.](#)