

Sustaining Our Environment, Protecting Our Freedom



Department of the Navy Environmental Strategy

Office of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy
(Installations and Environment)
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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
(INSTALLATIONS AND ENVIRONMENT)
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MEMORANDUM FOR DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Department of the Navy Comprehensive Environmental Strategy

The Department of the Navy is committed to preserving the environment as a necessary part of our mission to protect the United States. As we move further into the 21st century, the Department is focused on transforming its warfighting capabilities and sustaining its installations. As part of this transformation, the Department of the Navy Environmental Strategy links accomplishment of our warfighting mission with our responsibility to safeguard the natural systems upon which our quality of life depends.

The DON Environmental Strategy was developed with valuable input from the Navy and Marine Corps, and will serve to unify the diverse group of environmental stakeholders found within the Department as we continue to pursue the common goal of environmental excellence.

The strategy contains guidance for the Department as it executes its environmental mission, but it will succeed only when accompanied by actionable plans from your organizations, tailored to your specific areas of expertise and equity.

I look forward to continuing our work together as we execute the strategy, and transform our organizational culture to one where the environmental mission takes on new importance as a necessary part of our military mission. Thank you for your leadership as we move forward in this effort.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "BJ Penn".

BJ Penn

Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of the Department of the Navy (DON) environmental strategy is to:

- Strengthen the **vital link** between our **warfighting mission** and our responsibility to **safeguard the environment**.
- Integrate environmental stewardship with DON's **operations, acquisitions, and installation management**.
- Empower our people – our Sailors, Marines, and Civilians – to take the actions that will make DON a **leader in environmental stewardship**.
- Build partnerships with **international, Federal, state, and local organizations, and individuals** to more effectively meet our environmental goals.

Vision

Sustaining our Environment, Protecting our Freedom

Environmental stewardship protects and preserves the mission capabilities of our installations and training areas, ensures operational flexibility by meeting environmental laws and regulations, and sustains the resources and public support needed to carry out the mission. The environment must be considered **before, during, and after** the operations we undertake as part of our National Defense mission. Maintaining and improving environmental quality on installations and ranges can help ensure our ability to use them for their intended purposes, raises the quality of life for Sailors, Marines, and the local community, and avoids significant liabilities that require cleanup, restoration, or other actions, allowing our bases and operating areas continue to meet critical mission requirements.

The DON Environmental Strategy empowers every Sailor, Marine, and Civilian Employee to take a proactive role in protecting the environment, helping the Department to:

- Meet our mission requirements
- Protect and enhance the environment where we live, work, and train
- Build equity with our internal and external stakeholders
- Manage, and even reduce costs
- Enhance internal and external awareness of our commitment to environmental stewardship

This strategy is DON's environmental "way ahead," and will allow our Navy and Marine Corps to stay strong and relevant, now and into the future.



Strategic Environmental Goals

The DON strategic environmental goals constitute broad guidance in support of strategic planning at the organizational level, and should be incorporated into plans, policy, and guidance to ensure they become an inherent part of day-to-day operations, installation and facility management, and acquisition. Only through the constant pursuit and ultimate achievement of these goals can we, as a Department, fulfill our responsibilities to the people of the United States.

Accomplish the Mission

DON's warfighting mission is to maintain, train, and equip combat-ready Naval forces capable of winning wars, deterring aggression and maintaining freedom of the seas. Environmental stewardship is an essential part of our mission. Preserving and protecting the resources in our training and operating areas allows us continued use of those areas for years to come.

- Train Realistically – Each Sailor and Marine must receive high-quality training required to maintain competency in combat. **Degraded naval and land ranges limit realistic training.** It is therefore critical that DON preserve and enhance the environmental quality of the areas in which it operates.
- Protect People – Clean air, water, and land are essential to the safety and health of our military and civilian personnel and their families, and our neighbors in the communities where we train and operate. Protecting the health of our Sailors and Marines by providing a clean, healthy environment in which to train and work directly supports our ability to deploy, and promotes community confidence in our stewardship efforts.
- Lead the Way – The Department must meet or exceed statutory and regulatory obligations governing protection and conservation of the environment. Elected officials and the public expect the government to lead the way in protecting the environment. It is up to us to meet their expectations.
- Proactive Planning - DON must continuously analyze and plan for current and future operational, installation and training requirements, and for the acquisition, deployment, utilization and disposal/demilitarization of the hardware and systems required to execute those requirements. Such planning must include a rigorous evaluation of our activities, systems, and platforms to determine consistency with environmental legislation, regulations, international agreements, and stakeholder concerns.



Build Trust with the Public

The public has important equity in our activities – together we will foster open dialogue, transparency, and collaboration with the communities where we live and operate, building trust and improving our decisions by considering all information and perspectives. Sailors, Marines, and Civilian Employees, are citizens, neighbors, and leaders in the communities that surround our installations. Working together, we can foster cooperation between external and internal stakeholders that will result in a better quality of life for all.

- Communication – DON will foster transparency on environmental issues by openly sharing environmental data about our installations and activities with the public and government agencies. We will be receptive to the comments and concerns of our government agency and international partners, our local neighbors, and representatives of non-governmental organizations.
- Advance Partnerships – Recognizing that environmental issues extend “beyond the fence line,” DON will partner with International, Federal, State, and local agencies, working with the appropriate public and private organizations and individuals to maximize our effectiveness in addressing environmental issues.
- Internal Engagement – Our Sailors, Marines, and Civilian Employees are more aware of environmental issues than any previous generation and **represent potential spokespeople**. We must leverage that asset by providing our internal audience with the guidance and latest information needed to achieve our environmental goals.

Promote Knowledge as a Driver of Environmental Excellence

It is not enough to operate in pursuit of our mission and simply hope that we are not having a negative effect on the environment. DON must have the knowledge to operate responsibly while anticipating and preparing for the future. We must be passionate about gathering that knowledge and making it accessible to the Department and the public.

- Increase and Enhance Knowledge – DON will devote the necessary resources to research, understand, and manage the effects our operations have on the environments in which we train and operate.
- Empower our People – We will put the results of our research in the hands of our people so they can plan for, and minimize, effects on the environment. This will be accomplished through informed development of sound, science-based policies and development of new technologies that allow us to fulfill DON’s mission and environmental stewardship objectives efficiently and economically.



- Educate and Inform – DON will make environmental education a part of our curricula, training programs, and distance-learning resources in order to produce leaders able to take up the challenge of advancing DON's culture to one of environmental awareness and action.

Transform our Environmental Enterprise Practices

Constantly improving our business practices helps DON meet its National Defense obligations and allows us to operate in an environmentally sustainable manner while reducing costs to the taxpayer.

- Investments in Long-Term Solutions – DON challenges leaders to have the foresight, knowledge, and courage to explore and adopt technologies and solutions that offer long-term environmental and financial dividends.
- Continual Process Improvement – DON will employ best practices to reduce waste, ensuring scarce resources remain available to the warfighter and to the public for generations to come.
 - Waste reduction preserves and maintains availability of precious resources, and reduces DON's environmental footprint.
 - Improvements in efficiency save time and money. Ensuring our procedures are environmentally viable prevents re-work or remediation in the future.
- “All Hands” Effort – Input and a critical eye are necessary on all levels for environmental improvement to take place. The individual Sailor or Marine represent DON's end-user. They must be encouraged to identify issues and to recommend and institute solutions that eliminate waste, improve the environment, and reduce long-term costs.

Link Environment and Acquisition

DON can lower costs, reduce waste, and head off potential impacts to our operations by identifying and eliminating or mitigating environmental impacts during the acquisition process. This requires DON to:

- Enhance Environmental Considerations in Acquisition – Acquisition professionals must identify environmental requirements during system design. Making environmental considerations integral to the acquisition process helps avoid risks prior to initial fielding of a system.
- Environmental Team Effort – DON organizations with environmental experience and knowledge are instrumental in ensuring environmental considerations are identified, addressed, and revisited throughout the lifetime of the system. These experts must engage early and often to ensure new systems can operate in compliance with environmental regulations and laws. 4



- Procurement for the Future – DON acquisition personnel shall incorporate pollution prevention principles, adopt a “green procurement” philosophy, and employ technology to meet DoD environmental stewardship objectives where efficiency and economics warrant with an overall objective of **reducing the Department’s environmental footprint**. Energy efficiency, use of alternative energy sources including sustainable energy sources, and energy conservation initiatives shall be considered in every acquisition program consistent with warfighting requirements.
- Cradle to Grave Assessment – There is real potential for reduced lifecycle and disposal costs when less hazardous, recyclable, and environmentally-friendly materials are incorporated into new systems. As such, it is necessary for acquisition program managers to develop and make available information on all potential environmental impacts of their programs in order to support future deployment, operation, training and demilitarization requirements.

Move Beyond Compliance

DON leadership views environmental stewardship as a duty, and part of the mission of the Navy and Marine Corps. The goal of environmental excellence must be internalized by the individual Sailor, Marine, and Civilian. Our people must **look ahead, think ahead, and plan ahead** when it comes to the environment.

- DON holds many of the nation’s natural resources in a **public trust**. It is our duty to the people of the United States to conserve, protect, and restore those resources.
- Compliance is a Starting Point – Compliance with environmental law is not enough. Going beyond the requirements of the law, when warranted by the potential benefit to the environment and our mission, must be encouraged and rewarded.
- Enabling our People to Act – Our people must have the knowledge, information, resources, and incentive to make decisions that will address environmental issues before they become crises. Tools such as Environmental Management Systems (EMS) enable DON to be proactive and preventive in meeting our environmental responsibilities
- Situational Awareness – DON will proactively monitor trends in environmental law, regulation, and scientific research. Only with knowledge and understanding of these trends can our people effectively gauge the future environmental drivers that will define DON’s future operations.



Implementation

A country worth defending is a country worth preserving. This strategy provides the broad direction with respect to the vision and goals that will define our efforts to make DON a world leader in protection and preservation of the environment in which we operate. This document should serve as a foundation for your efforts to develop tailored implementation strategies for DON organizations and programs. Detailed implementation guidance will be promulgated by the CNO and Commandant for subordinate commands. Individual strategies should stay true to the spirit of this document – link the warfighting mission with our responsibility to respect and preserve the environment. ***Sustaining our Environment, Protecting our Freedom*** is not just a phrase – it is the essence of the transformational thoughts, policies, and actions that are necessary to allow us to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

