



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OCT 27 2009

THE ADMINISTRATOR

EPA-SAB-09-018

Deborah L. Swackhamer, Ph.D.
Catherine Kling, Ph.D.
Office of the Administrator
Science Advisory Board
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Dr. Swackhamer and Dr. Kling:

Thank you for your recent "Advisory on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Guidelines for Preparing Economic Analyses" by the Science Advisory Board's Environmental Economics Advisory Committee. The summary of the recommendations on how the Agency can improve its guidelines document was particularly helpful to me.

I also thank you and the SAB-EEAC for the time and diligence you spent reviewing the document, deliberating on the charge questions and subsequently drafting the report. Science, including economics, must be the backbone for EPA programs. Our nation's public health and environmental laws depend on rigorous adherence to the best available science. When EPA addresses scientific issues, it should rely on the expert judgment of the Agency's career scientists and independent advisors. I am committed to EPA's use of the strongest possible science in as transparent a process as possible. Use of these SAB-reviewed Economic Guidelines will help EPA fulfill this commitment.

With the SAB's advisory report in hand, the Agency will move forward in completing the revisions to the Guidelines taking into account the detailed recommendations you have provided. I was particularly pleased to read your suggestions for an expansion of the discussion on the analysis of ecological systems and services (i.e., ecosystem benefits). Protecting and restoring our nation's water quality is one of our priorities. Understanding the benefits from reduced water pollution needs much more attention. EPA will reflect in our guidelines the recent advances in characterizing the ecological benefits of regulatory interventions.

We look forward to future interactions with the SAB on revisions to individual chapters of the Guidelines as we move away from a model of wholesale revisions to the document to more targeted revisions as the need arises. We anticipate this approach will provide added flexibility and will allow the Agency to keep abreast of important developments in science and economics as they occur.

Again, I very much appreciate your thoughtful and thorough advice. We will do our best to respond to each recommendation accordingly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Lisa P. Jackson', with a large, stylized initial 'L' and a long, sweeping underline.

Lisa P. Jackson