THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

SEP - 3 2014

David T. Allen, Ph.D.
Chairman
Science Advisory Board
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Dr. Allen:

Thank you for your March 7, 2014, letter in response to my sincere encouragement for advice, counsel and insight from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Scientific Advisory Board. As I said during our December meeting, sound science is absolutely essential to the EPA's decision making. Climate change continues to be a top priority, and we need your help on this challenge and on other complex issues.

Your letter is prompting broader discussion within the agency about how we can improve the process for selecting topics for SAB engagement. Historically, the EPA programs have recommended topics for SAB advice and counsel based on their distinct needs. However, issues that are broader in scope, such as those you suggested, can impact multiple programs but are less likely to be nominated by this single-office approach.

I have asked the EPA's Office of Research and Development to lead several interoffice discussions on the topics you have proposed and also to elicit the agency's suggestions for areas that need scientific advice. The goal is to have science and policy leaders engage in meaningful discussions with the SAB this fall or early winter on the highest priority topics in which the SAB could have the greatest impact. Given the multiple facets of priority issues, I believe that discussions with the SAB could help provide clarity and focus on the scientific questions that need attention.

I am very pleased that you will be meeting with our Office of Research and Development this summer to provide thoughts on research plans for 2016-19. I look forward to your report on that effort and believe it will contribute to our work on selecting priority topics for SAB involvement.

Sincerely,

Gina McCarthy

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