



# **Five-Year Strategic Plan 2024-2028**

## **Background and Introduction**

This ERIS Strategic Plan is designed to build on ERIS' previous work, to complement the work of the Environmental Council of the States (ECOS), and to support the Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council.

ERIS' Bylaws describe seven purposes:

- 1) to improve the environment of the United States;
- 2) to further the understanding of the roles and activities of the states in the federal system with respect to environmental protection;
- 3) to conduct environmental policy research including the dissemination of results through publications, meetings, electronic media and similar venues;
- 4) to act as a forum where state environmental policy makers may interact with other environmental stakeholders regarding environmental policy in the United States;
- 5) to provide educational programs to assist in the development of environmental policy in the United States;
- 6) to operate the Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council, which shall create a national coalition focused on developing tools and strategies to reduce interstate barriers to the deployment of innovative environmental technologies; and
- 7) for any other lawful purpose consistent with the provisions of the articles of incorporation.

As many of these purposes directly overlap with ECOS, the ERIS Board has decided to focus on the third and sixth purposes listed above. This Strategic Plan is designed to provide direction for ERIS as it seeks to further these two purposes.

## **Summary of Goals**

Goal 1 – Identify and communicate state environmental agency research needs.

Goal 2 – Share research products, tools, and other scientific resources and information with state environmental agencies.

Goal 3 – Continue oversight role with the Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council (ITRC).

## **Goal 1 – Identify and Communicate State Environmental Agency Research Needs**

As the “research arm” of ECOS, one important role of ERIS is identifying and communicating state environmental agency research needs. ERIS gathers and shares this information to optimize opportunities for state, federal, academic, and nongovernmental organization partners to collaboratively address these research needs.

### **Strategy 1.1 – Conduct biennial survey on state environmental agency research needs.**

For over a decade, ERIS has conducted a biennial survey of state environmental agency research needs. Every two years when the survey is conducted, ERIS has worked to improve the process to ensure both high-level input from ECOS members and details on the identified research needs from state staff. ERIS will continue to conduct the biennial survey and to pursue continuous improvement efforts to ensure that the results are useful and informative.

### **Strategy 1.2 – Develop and share biennial report on state environmental agency research needs.**

ERIS will continue to develop a written report of the results of the biennial survey. The reports each contain a high-level summary of the general research needs, as well as detailed outlines of specific research that could help states address those needs. As with the survey portion of this effort, ERIS will seek to continually improve the report. As each report is completed, it will be shared with ECOS members, U.S. EPA, and other appropriate parties such as The National Academies, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the White House Council on Environmental of Quality.

### **Strategy 1.3 - Advocate to have state environmental agency research needs met.**

ERIS will work with ECOS and ITRC to ensure that various federal, state, academic, and non-governmental organization partners are aware of state environmental agency research needs and will urge partners to undertake work to address them. This effort may take place through meetings, letters, and other communications.

## **Goal 2 – Share research products, tools, and other scientific resources and information with state environmental agencies.**

In addition to identifying and communicating state environmental agency research needs to a broader audience, ERIS will place an equal emphasis on sharing research products, tools, and other scientific resources and information from U.S. EPA and others with state environmental agencies. Helping state agencies find and access these resources will help them better protect the environment and human health across the United States.

### **Strategy 2.1 – Work with U.S. EPA’s Office of Research and Development to share their work with state environmental agencies.**

U.S. EPA’s Office of Research and Development (ORD) has made and continues to make efforts to improve how they share the results of their research with states. To support this effort, ERIS will highlight ORD’s communication efforts through events at ECOS meetings, sharing information in *ECOSWIRE* and on the [ERIS website](#), and providing input to ORD on additional ways to reach the states.

### **Strategy 2.2 – Identify and share research by state agencies.**

To help avoid duplication of effort and to maximize transferability, ERIS will work with state environmental and related agencies to identify state research areas of interest to other states. As this work is identified, ERIS will work with the agency conducting the research to find ways to share the results through appropriate venues such as ECOS meetings, webinars, *ECOSWIRE*, [the ERIS website](#), and other communications.

### **Strategy 2.3 – Identify and share research by other federal agencies, academics, and non-governmental organizations.**

As many agencies and organizations beyond U.S. EPA conduct research and develop scientific tools and resources that address state environmental agency needs, ERIS will develop contacts at key agencies and organizations to help track and identify research results of interest to state environmental agencies. ERIS will then share this information through appropriate venues such as ECOS meetings, webinars, *ECOSWIRE*, the [ERIS website](#), and other communications.

### **Goal 3 – Continue Oversight Role with the Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council.**

ERIS intends to continue its established oversight role with the Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council (ITRC) while strengthening this relationship in order to minimize duplication of effort, and to leverage respective organizational strengths.

#### **Strategy 3.1 – Continue to Provide Oversight to the Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council.**

As the entity with legal and fiduciary responsibilities for the ITRC, ERIS will continue to oversee the program. In its role as the connection between ITRC and ECOS, ERIS will provide input on teams and projects to assist the ITRC in navigating challenges. ERIS will encourage Board members to attend ITRC Advisory Board meetings.

#### **Strategy 3.2 – Support Enhanced Connections between the Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council and ECOS.**

As the ITRC continues its goal of expanding in areas beyond remediation, ERIS will support ITRC by helping to raise the profile of ITRC with ECOS members. This will include sharing the value of ITRC with ECOS members and seeking ECOS member support for state agency staff to engage in ITRC teams and trainings.

#### **Strategy 3.3 – Support Connections between the Interstate Technology & Regulatory Council and Partners.**

As the ITRC identifies teams that could be supported by partners beyond their traditional contacts, when requested ERIS will assist in making connections with other offices at U.S. EPA, at other federal agencies, and with other private businesses, foundations, and non-governmental organizations. Additionally, ERIS will support ITRC's efforts to obtain support from its current partners.