

Program Evaluation

Detail Assignment from the EPA's National
Center for Environmental Innovation

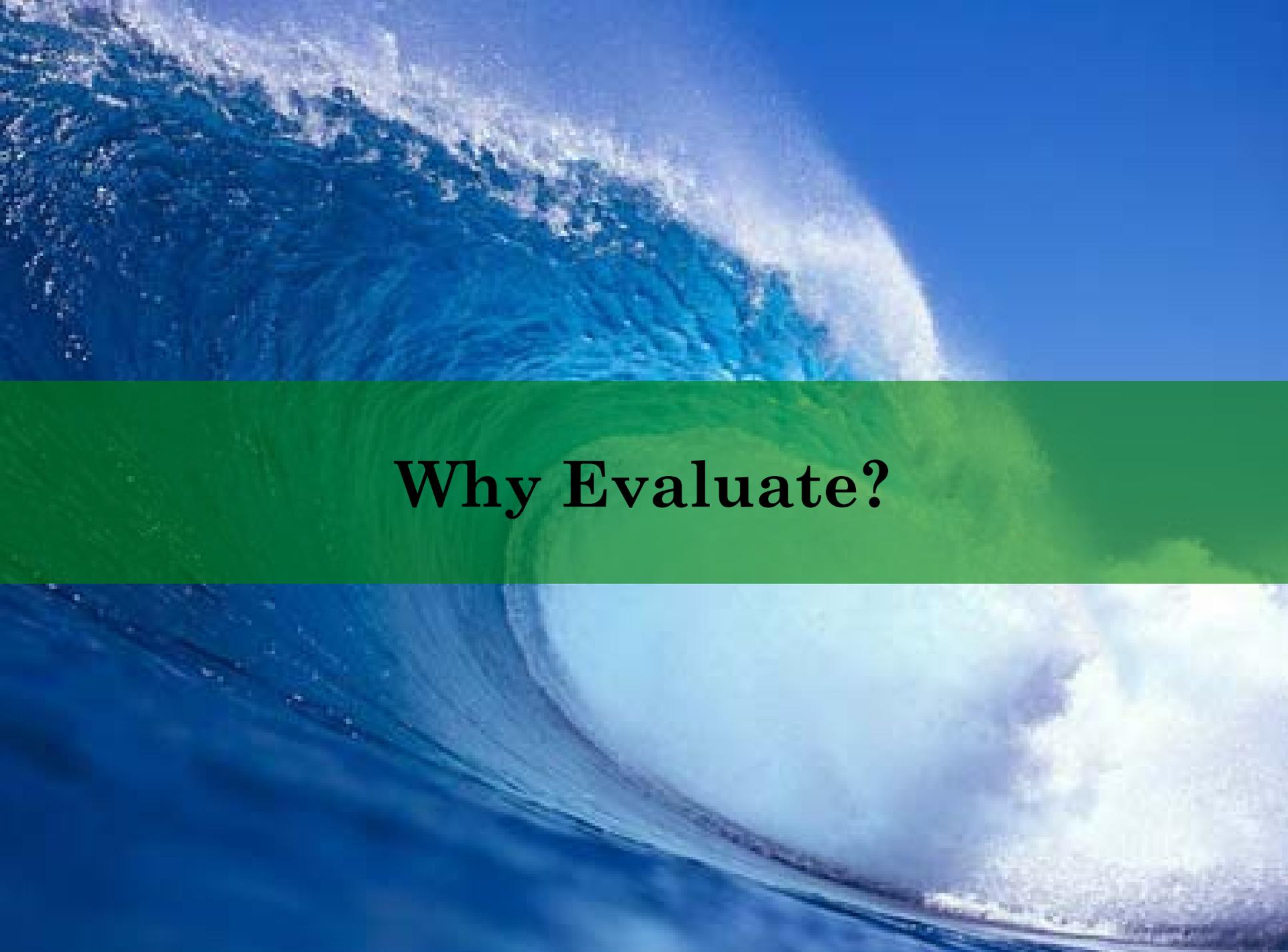
2009



Presentation Journey

- Importance of evaluation
- Another agency's evaluation activities
- My detail assignments
- Things to Consider for NOAA



A large, powerful blue wave is crashing against a green horizontal band. The wave is on the left side of the image, with white foam and spray. The green band is in the center, and the wave is breaking over it. The background is a clear blue sky.

Why Evaluate?

WHAT IS PROGRAM EVALUATION?

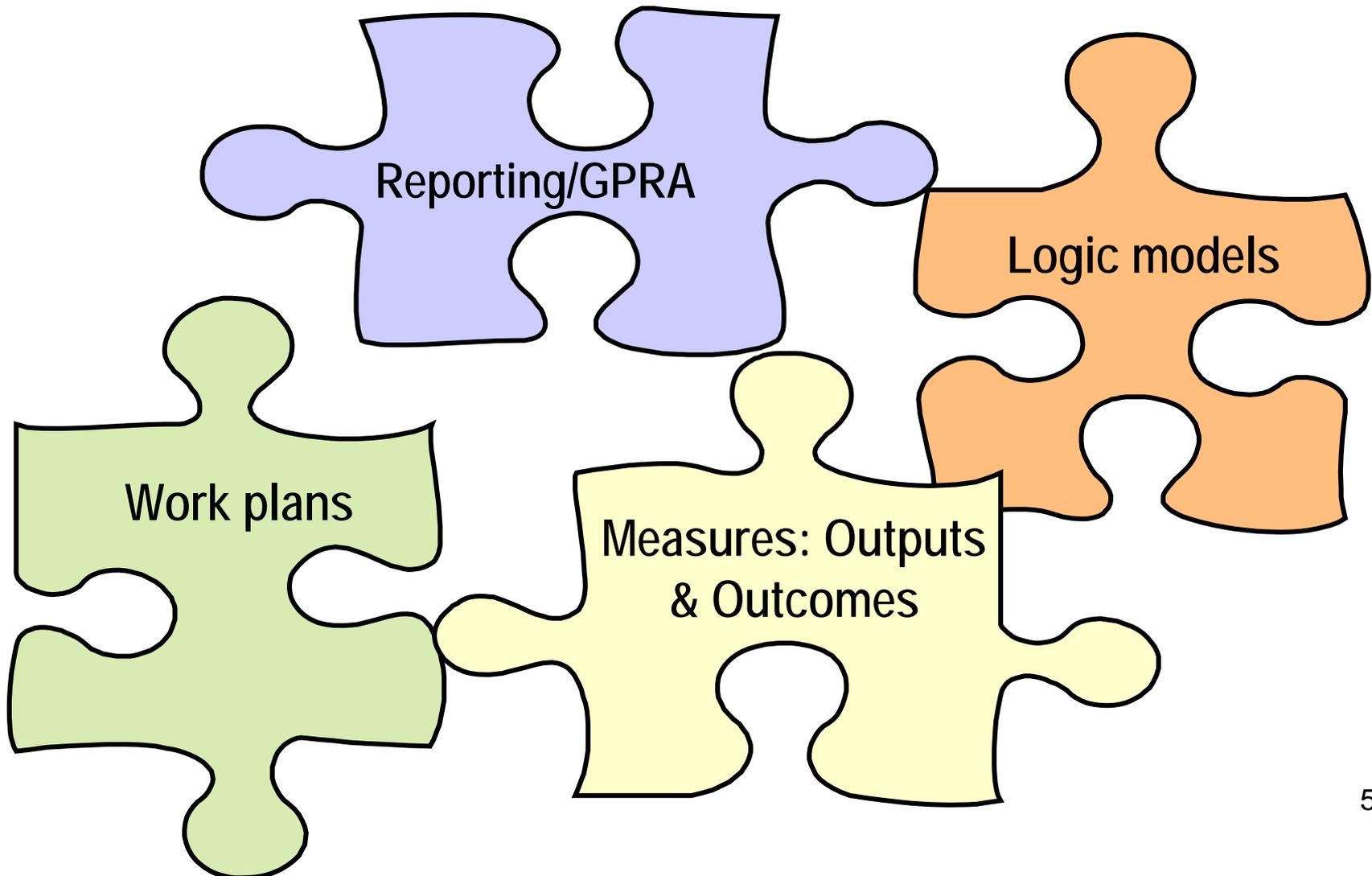
Program Evaluation:

A systematic study that uses measurement and analysis to answer specific questions about how well a program is working to achieve its outcomes and why.

Performance Measurement:

The ongoing monitoring and reporting of program progress and accomplishments, using pre-selected performance measures.

The Bigger Picture: How does it fit together?



Performance Management Tools

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance management includes activities to ensure that goals are consistently being met in an effective and efficient manner. **Performance management tools include logic models, performance measurement and program evaluation.**

Logic Model

Tool/framework that helps identify the program/project resources, activities, outputs customers, and outcomes.



Performance Measurement

Helps you understand what level of performance is achieved by the program/project.



Program Evaluation

Helps you understand and explain why you're seeing the program/project results.

Leading Efforts Across the Agency Evaluation Support Division

National Center for Environmental Innovation

- Office of the Administrator
- Office of Policy Economics and Innovations
- National Center Environmental Innovation

Director- Geologist

7 Staff (program analyst/generalist)

- Social Scientist
- Psychologist
- Urban studies/urban planning
- economist
- Detailees- economist plus me
- Interns -4



Evaluation Support Division Mission

Mission:

Conduct and enable partners to more effectively conduct program evaluations and analyses that inform management decisions, enhance organizational learning, promote innovation and foster environmental results.



Evaluation Activities

- Document and share the results of Innovation Analyses
- Co-sponsor the Program Evaluation Network with OCFO,
- Sponsor Environmental Evaluators Networking Forum
- Develop evaluation tools and products
- Encourage the development of professional skills by sharing information on Evaluation Training
- Sponsor Program Evaluation Competition



Evaluation Capacity-Building

- Technical Assistance/Consultation
- Leadership Training
- Training materials
 - Using statistics to support measure development and evaluation design (under development)
 - Logic models
 - Performance measurement
 - Program evaluation
 - Primer for managers
 - Train-the-Trainer
 - Innovation analyses
- External partners



"And so you just threw everything together? ...
Mathews, a posse is something
you have to organize."

MY PROJECTS

- Program Evaluation Competition (PEC)
- Environmental Evaluators Networking Forum
- Performance management training
- Technical assistance
- Capacity-building development tools
 - Online training courses
 - Logic models
 - Fact sheets



MY PROJECTS

Technical Assistance

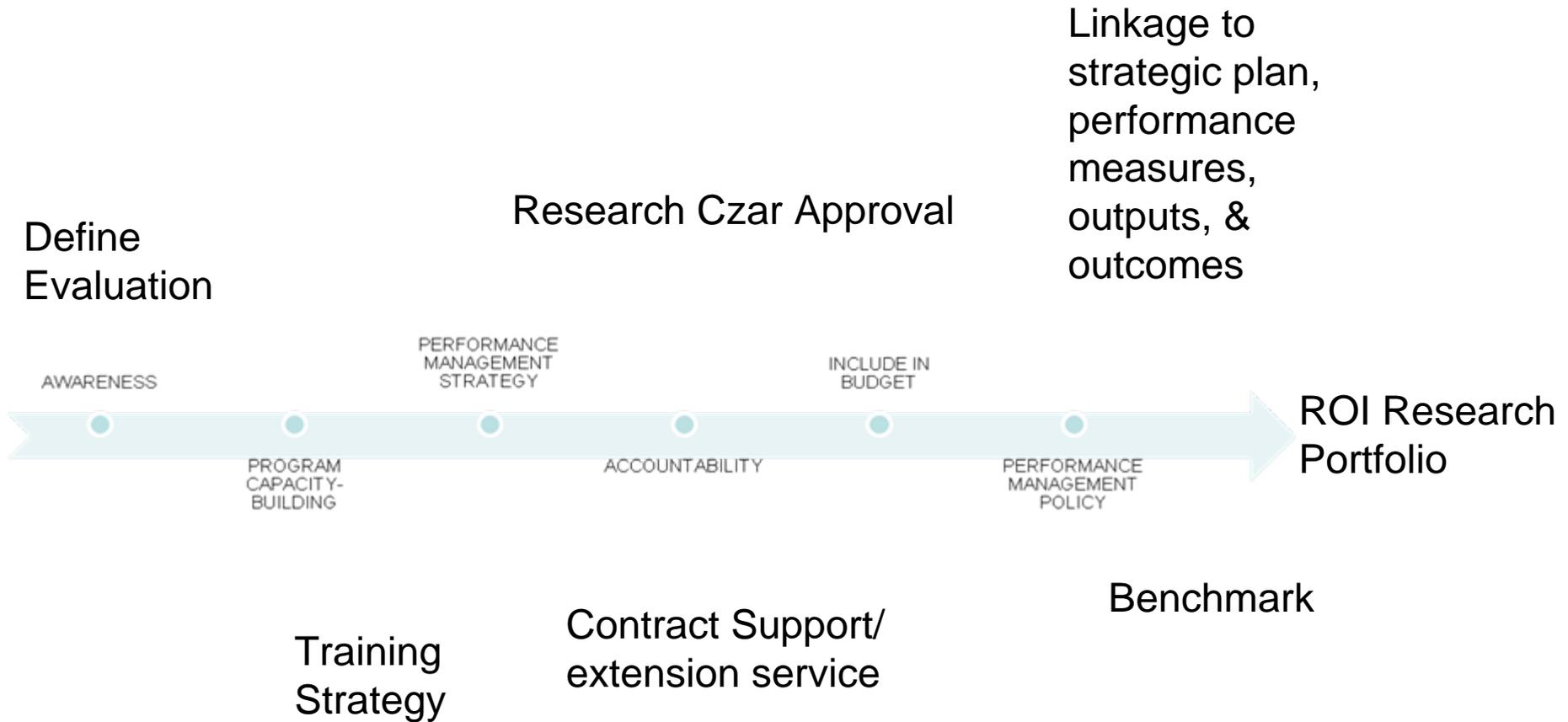
- Developed Logic Models
 - PEC, Green Jobs Team, State Innovation Grants, ESD
- Served on PEC review panel and recommended funding
- Designed new course on using statistics in measurement and evaluation
- Advised other offices on how to overcome evaluation resistance



THINGS TO CONSIDER FOR NOAA

1. Increase agency capacity to conduct routine program evaluation
2. Provide structure and conceptual understanding necessary to integrate performance management into program/ project design
3. Adjust program strategies and approaches to improve results
4. Test assumptions about links between outputs and outcomes/results

Path to Evaluation



YES WE CAN Build Agency Capacity

- Ensure a culture of evaluation in PPBES cycle and routine program management
- Establish Program Evaluation Network
- Develop common framework and language for conducting evaluations and developing performance measures
- Establish Program Evaluation Competition
- Participate in AEA, Evaluators Institute, Federal Evaluators Network, Environmental Evaluators Network



Institutionalize Training for Managers and Staff

- Include planning and budgeting staff, academic partners, communications, and legal counsel in “Level 101” trainings
- Establish contract vehicles for third party assistance
- Sponsor detail/rotation opportunities for headquarters, regions, programs



IMPROVE RESULTS

- Identify opportunities for web-based and on-line training, performance management “best practices,” and lessons learned



- Use the Strategic Plan and Annual Operating Plan to prioritize programs that would benefit most from evaluation in the next 1-3 years.
- Develop an internal annual evaluation plan to focus attention on priorities. Update it annually to reflect changing priorities.
- Identify responsible parties for conducting priority evaluations, available resources, and opportunities for leveraging resources

Why PE.....

TEST ASSUMPTIONS

- Replicate success
- Provide opportunities for greater efficiency and effectiveness in light of the decreasing budget
- Lessen the struggle to develop good performance measures
- Explain failure to meet GPRA or other performance targets





Program Evaluation Competition (PEC)



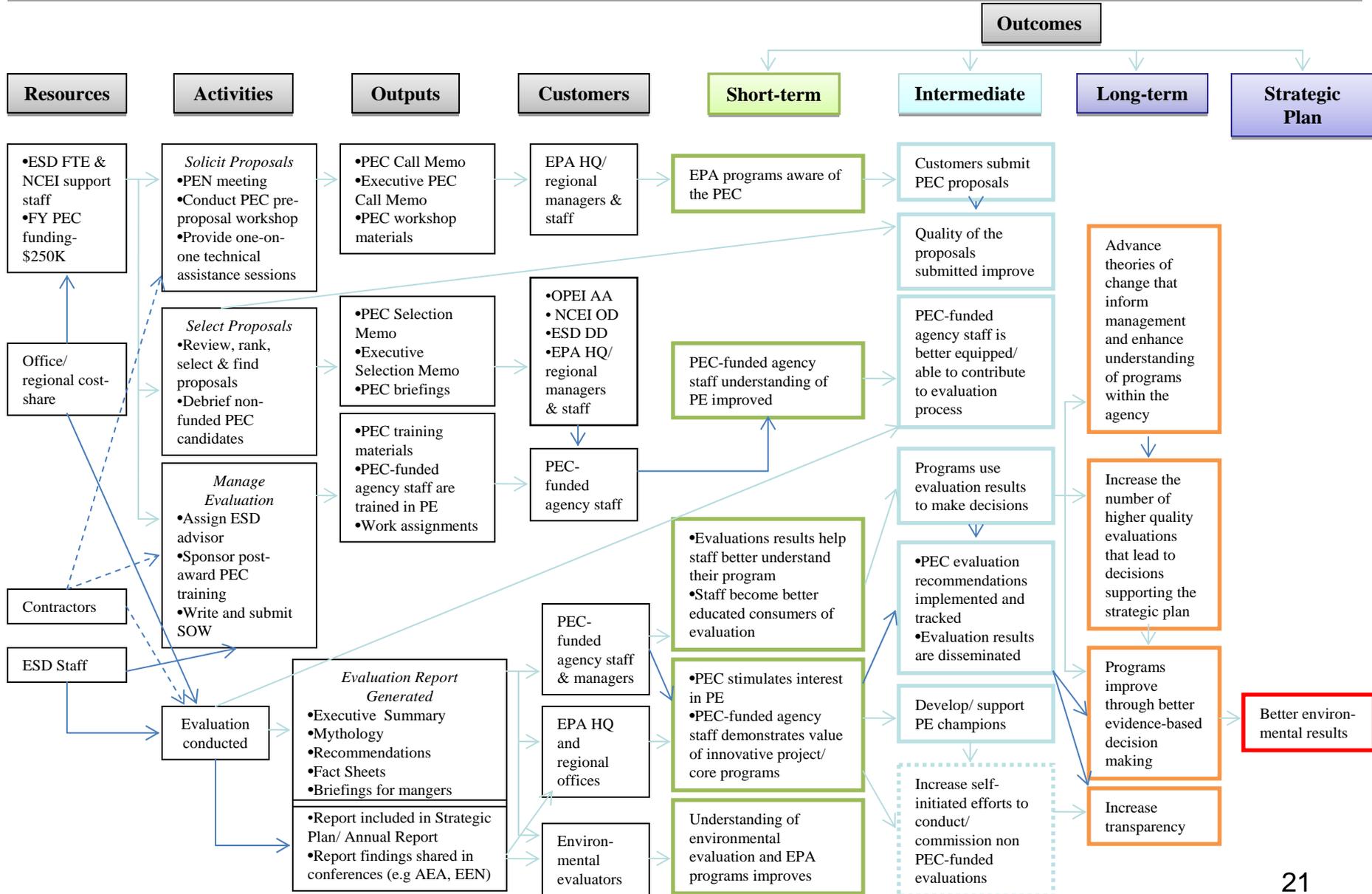
Program Evaluation Competition

- PEC Logic Model
- PEC Performance Measures
- PEC Recommendation Categories
- PEC Recommendation Adoption Taxonomy
- Data Collection/ Tracking Instrument



Program Evaluation Competition: Logic Model

The PEC (1) provides seed money to HQ and Regions for PE; (2) demonstrates the value of PE; (3) encourages evaluation of core programs and innovative projects; (4) develops and supports PE Champions within EPA Offices and Regions; (5) addresses programs of strategic importance to the EPA; and (6) allows PEC-funded agency staff to better understand their programs and use evaluation results.



External Factors: Program's discretion to: (1) submit PEC proposals, (2) implement evaluation recommendations, and (3) conduct additional program evaluations independent of the PEC.

BRIGHTER FUTURE



NEXT STEPS

- Offer technical assistance to create logic models
- Share training materials and fact sheets
- Establish Program Evaluation Network (PEN) for NOAA
- Create evaluation strategy vetted with PEN



QUESTIONS?





BACKGROUND



**ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATORS
NETWORKING FORUM**

Environmental Evaluators Networking Forum

- Sponsors:
 - EPA - NCEI
 - Fish and Wildlife Foundation
 - The George Washington University Trachtenberg School of Public Policy and Public Administration
- June 8-9, 2009, George Washington University
- 4th year
- Participants: 230 domestic and international
- Federal, state, local and tribal government, charitable foundations, non-profits, consulting firms, and academic institutions

Value of Environmental Evaluation EEN

- Forum theme: value of environmental evaluation (EE) from various perspectives
- Context of EE
- Valuing EE in program design, sharing lessons learned from evaluation methods, capacity building, and adaptive management
- Case Studies and practical data and information techniques
- Networking opportunities: speed dating



EEN Products

EE workgroups

- Repository of Environmental Evaluations
- Environmental Evaluator's Toolbox
- Communications products

Strategic Plan Goals

- ***Quality***
- ***Credibility***
- ***Value***
- ***Consistency***