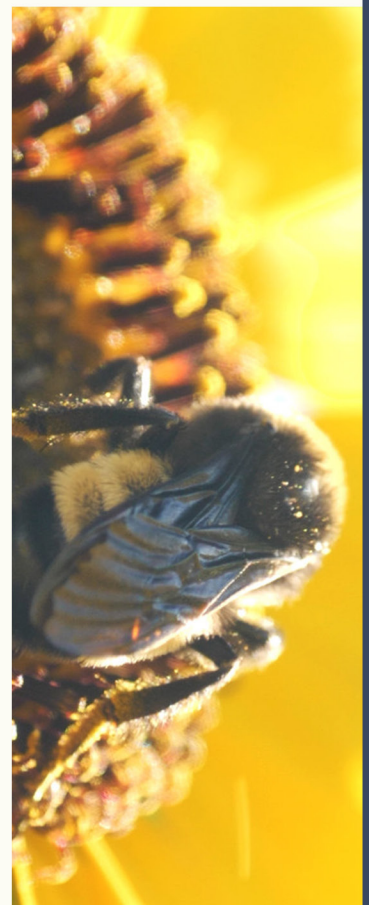




U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General



USDA Climate Hubs: Enhancing Working Lands' Resilience and Productivity

Audit Report 50801-0001-22

OIG assessed whether the USDA Climate Hubs developed performance measures to achieve the goal of enhancing working lands' resilience and productivity.

OBJECTIVE

Our objective was to determine whether USDA Climate Hubs developed metrics to measure how the Hubs achieve its goal to enhance working lands' resilience and productivity.

REVIEWED

We reviewed the one measure presented in USDA's annual performance plan for fiscal years 2022-2023; five measures in the Climate Hubs' 2020-2025 strategic plan; and selected Climate Hubs' annual and quarterly accomplishment reports issued in fiscal years 2022, 2023, or both. We also reviewed 12 measures internally tracked by the Climate Hubs.

RECOMMENDS

We recommend the Climate Hubs establish targets and timeframes for its measures, develop outcome-based measures and key performance indicator(s) that align(s) to its strategic goals, and revise its performance reporting process to follow Federal requirements.

WHAT OIG FOUND

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Climate Hubs is a Departmental collaboration that involves interagency communication and amplifies the contributions of USDA agencies and offices. Through the Climate Hubs' 10 regional Hubs, USDA provides technical support for agricultural producers and landowners responding to climate change; assesses and monitors the risk to agricultural production; and conducts research and education about the effects of climate change on agriculture and forests. The Climate Hubs developed a five-year strategic plan to communicate its three goals and strategies to achieve those goals. Our inspection focused on the Climate Hubs' measures for enhancing working lands' resilience and productivity (strategic goal 1).

Although the Climate Hubs developed measures to track its strategic goal 1 accomplishments, we found that these measures did not meet the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act Modernization Act of 2010 and the Office of Management and Budget Circular A-11. Specifically, the Climate Hubs had not designed its measures to include targets and timeframes for completion or incorporate some outcome-based measures. In addition, the Climate Hubs did not clearly communicate how these measures aligned with the Climate Hubs' strategic goals in its plans and reports. As a result, the Climate Hubs cannot sufficiently demonstrate to stakeholders how its performance will achieve the desired result of enhancing working lands' resilience and productivity.

USDA Climate Hubs officials agreed with our finding and recommendations, and we accepted management decision on all recommendations.



OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

United States Department of Agriculture



DATE: September 24, 2024

INSPECTION

NUMBER: 50801-0001-22

TO:

Simon Liu
Administrator
Agricultural Research Service
ATTN: Chevon Gibson

Randy Moore
Chief
Forest Service
ATTN: Claudette Baca

Robert Ibarra
Chief Operating Officer
Farm Production and Conservation
ATTN: Michelle Dunn

Dr. Seth Meyer
Chief Economist
Office of the Chief
Economist
ATTN: Cynthia Nickerson

Terry Cosby
Chief
Natural Resources Conservation Service
ATTN: Gary Weishaar

FROM:

Janet Sorensen
Assistant Inspector General for Audit

SUBJECT: USDA Climate Hubs: Enhancing Working Lands' Resilience and Productivity – Final Report

This report presents the results of our inspection of the USDA Climate Hubs: Enhancing Working Lands' Resilience and Productivity. Your written response to the official draft is included in its entirety at the end of the report. Based on your written response, we are accepting management decision for all 4 recommendations in the report, and no further response to this office is necessary.

In accordance with Departmental Regulation 1720-1, final action needs to be taken within 1 year of the date of each management decision. Please follow your internal agency procedures in forwarding final action correspondence to the Office of the Chief Financial Officer.

We appreciate the courtesies and cooperation extended to us by members of your staff during our fieldwork and subsequent discussions. This report contains publicly available information and will be posted in its entirety to our website (<https://usdaoig.oversight.gov>) in the near future.

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Background and Objective

Background

The United States Department Agriculture (USDA) Climate Hubs, established in 2014, is a Departmental collaboration involving interagency communication and amplifying the contributions of several USDA agencies and offices. The mission of the Climate Hubs is to develop and deliver science-based, region-specific information and technologies for agricultural, forest, and natural resource managers and communities that enable climate informed decision making, and to assist in implementing those decisions. Through the Climate Hubs' 10 regional Hubs (illustrated in Figure 1), USDA provides technical support for agricultural producers and landowners responding to climate change; assesses and monitors the risk to agricultural production; and conducts research and education about the effects of climate change on agriculture and forests.

Map of the Climate Hubs' Regions

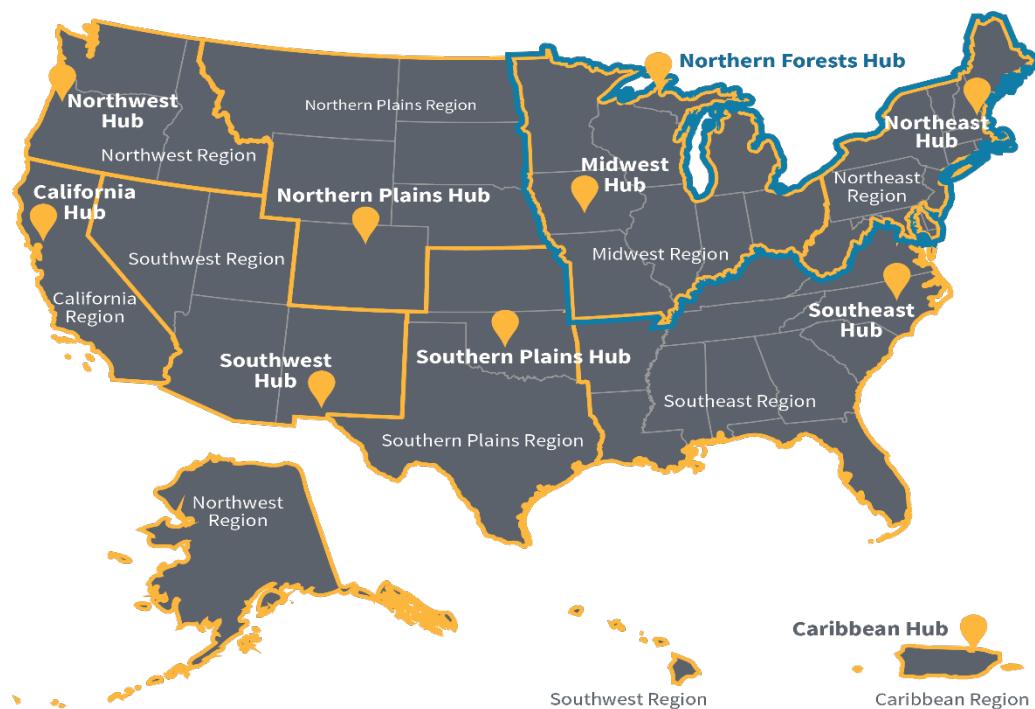


Figure 1: Map of the 10 Regional Climate Hubs from USDA Climate Hubs Website:
www.climatehubs.usda.gov/contact. Last accessed on May 30, 2024.

The regional Hubs are individually led by staff from the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and Forest Service (FS), with support and guidance from a National Lead and National Coordinator.¹ Every 2 years, the position of National Lead rotates between three USDA agencies: ARS, FS, and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The National Lead

¹ Five USDA Climate Hubs are led by FS Research Stations, and five are led by ARS Laboratories.

directs and coordinates the Climate Hubs' activities and works with partner agencies and departments. The National Coordinator, a permanent position housed in the Office of the Chief Economist's (OCE) Climate Change Program Office, provides full-time support to the Climate Hubs.

Additional oversight is provided by a multi-agency Executive Committee which is led by a rotating chair and a permanent co-chair from OCE.² The Executive Committee's responsibilities include setting national and regional priorities for the Climate Hubs; developing a strategic plan for the Climate Hubs along with the implementation plan to achieve the strategic goals; and directing the Climate Hubs' performance review process every 5 years.

The Climate Hubs developed a five-year strategic plan to communicate its three goals and strategies to achieve those goals, along with measures to strive toward over the next 5 years.³ This inspection focused on the Climate Hubs' measures for strategic goal 1.⁴ (see Figure 2).



Figure 2: Climate Hubs' Three Strategic Goals. Figure by Office of Inspector General (OIG).

The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993, as amended by the GPRA Modernization Act (GPRAMA) of 2010, establishes a framework for performance management and accountability within the Federal Government.⁵ While GPRA requires agencies to set goals and report performance annually, the purpose of GPRAMA is to improve program performance by requiring agencies to set goals, measure performance against those goals, and report publicly on progress.⁶ In addition, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-11, Part 6, describes the Federal performance framework and provides guidance to agencies implementing requirements under GPRAMA.⁷

Both GPRAMA and OMB Circular A-11 include guidance related to performance measurement and requirements on an agency's strategic plans, annual performance plans, and annual

² The Climate Hubs Executive Committee includes leadership from the following USDA agencies: ARS, FS, NRCS, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Economic Research Service, Farm Service Agency, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Risk Management Agency, and Rural Development.

³ USDA Climate Hubs Strategic Plan 2020-2025 (publication date: September 13, 2021).

⁴ Strategic goal 1 aims to ensure that agricultural lands, national forests, and private working lands are managed, conserved, and restored to enhance productivity and resilience to climate change.

⁵ Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, Pub. L. No. 103-62, 107 Stat. 285.

⁶ GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, Pub. L. 111-352, 124 Stat. 3866 (2011).

⁷ OMB, *Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget*, Circular A-11 (Aug. 11, 2023).

performance reporting, as shown in Figure 3 below. Performance measurement focuses on whether a program has achieved its objectives, which are expressed as measurable performance standards.⁸ Most Federal agencies now use performance measures to track progress towards goals. Performance measures may address the type or level of program activities conducted (process), the direct products and services delivered by a program (outputs), or the results of those products and services (outcomes).

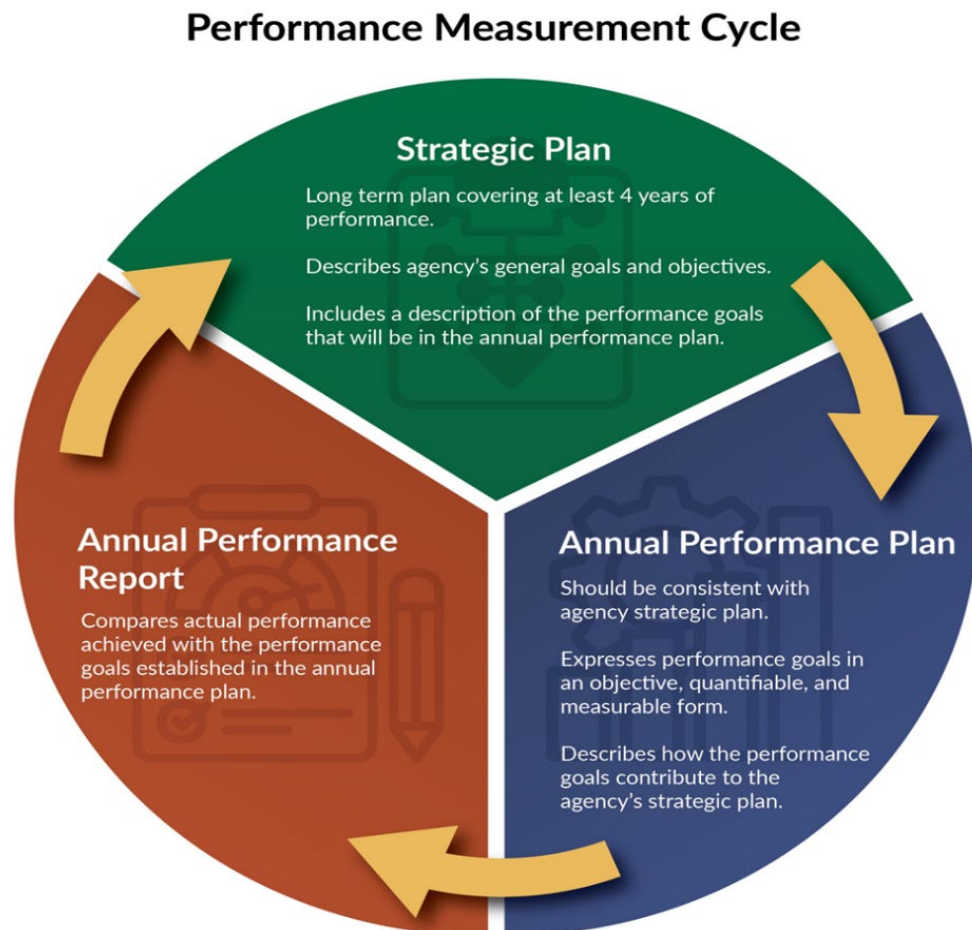


Figure 3: Performance Measurement Cycle. Figure by OIG.

Objective

Our objective was to determine whether USDA Climate Hubs developed metrics to measure how the Hubs achieve its goal to enhance working lands' resilience and productivity.⁹

⁸ The United States Government Accountability Office (GAO) defined *performance measurement* as the ongoing monitoring and reporting of program accomplishments, particularly progress toward pre-established goals. GAO, *Performance Measurement and Evaluation: Definitions and Relationships*, GAO-11-646SP (May 2011).

⁹ Throughout this report, we use the term *performance measures* in lieu of *metrics* to measure how the Hubs achieve its goal. The meaning of these terms is synonymous for this inspection.

Section 1: USDA Did Not Fully Comply with Government Performance Management Requirements

USDA's Climate Hubs reported one performance measure, referred to as a key performance indicator (KPI), in USDA's fiscal year (FY) 2023 Performance Plan and presented five performance measures in its 2020-2025 strategic plan, as displayed in our sidebar.¹⁰ ¹¹ Internally, the Climate Hubs also used 12 measures to capture and track its accomplishments for annual and quarterly performance reporting (see Exhibit A).

Although we found that the Climate Hubs developed performance measures to track its achievements towards the goal of enhancing working lands' resilience and productivity (strategic goal 1), these measures did not meet the requirements for government performance management. This occurred because the Climate Hubs did not design its measures to include targets, timeframes, and outcome-based measures; align with the strategic goal; or clearly communicate the Hubs' progress to stakeholders. As a result, the Climate Hubs officials cannot determine and publicly report to stakeholders if its activities are achieving the strategic goal.

GPRAMA requires performance measures to be expressed in an objective, quantifiable, and measurable form, and to define the level of performance to be achieved, with clearly defined milestones.¹² Further, performance measures should be a balanced set of indicators, including output and outcome indicators, for measuring or assessing progress towards performance goals, and describe how they contribute to the goals and objectives established in the agency's strategic plan.¹³ OMB Circular A-11 defines a performance measure as including an indicator, target, and timeframe.¹⁴

After evaluating the Climate Hubs' performance measures against GPRAMA and OMB requirements, we identified the following areas where the Climate Hubs can improve its measures and accomplishment reporting.



PUBLIC REPORTING OF CLIMATE HUBS PERFORMANCE MEASURES

USDA's FY 2023 Performance Plan contains one key performance indicator for the Climate Hubs:

Number of stakeholders supported through Climate Hubs' capacity-building activities.

The target for this indicator is a 2.5% increase in FY 2022 and a 5% increase in FY 2023.

The Climate Hubs' strategic plan contains these five performance measures:

Number of vulnerability or other significant climate assessments completed.

Number of peer-reviewed publications or general technical bulletins completed.

Number of curated or customized tools or technologies developed or supported.

Number of trainings or capacity building workshops completed.

Number of developed demonstration projects, education modules, or curricula.

¹⁰ As defined in USDA's FY 2023 Performance Plan, a key performance indicator is a performance measure used to track progress toward achieving a strategic objective.

¹¹ USDA, FY 2023 Performance Plan (Mar. 2022) and USDA Climate Hubs Strategic Plan 2020-2025 (publication date: September 13, 2021).

¹² GPRA Modernization Act of 2010, Pub. L. No. 111-352, 124 Stat. 3866 (2011).

¹³ The types of performance indicators include customer service, efficiency, output, and outcome.

¹⁴ OMB, Preparation, Submission, and Execution of the Budget, Circular A-11 (Aug. 11, 2023).

Climate Hubs' Performance Measures Lack Targets and Timeframes

Aside from the KPI presented in USDA's FY 2023 Performance Plan, the Climate Hubs' performance measures – both from the strategic plan and internal measures.¹⁵ – were not presented with quantifiable targets or timeframes for completion.¹⁶ Specifically, the Climate Hubs five performance measures in its strategic plan did not provide stakeholders with a planned level of achievement to indicate what the Hubs expected to accomplish towards the measure, and the timeframes for completing that achievement (see sidebar on previous page). Additionally, the Climate Hubs' 12 internally tracked measures did not include associated targets. Climate Hubs officials stated identifying targets and timeframes to address all its regional needs is difficult. Another official explained that each regional Hub is charged with responding in ways that reduce its own regional climate vulnerabilities. While we recognize the Climate Hubs' regional differences, the Climate Hubs should establish required quantifiable targets and timeframes to maximize its ability to measure and assess overall progress towards meeting its strategic goals.

A Balanced Set of Performance Measures is Needed

According to GPRAMA, a balanced set of performance measures should include output and outcome measures.¹⁷ ¹⁸ See Figure 4.

The Climate Hubs designed output-based performance measures, including those measures tracked internally, and used those measures to tabulate its activity levels. However, these measures limit the Climate Hubs ability to assess, compare, and report on the overall accomplishments under its strategic goals.

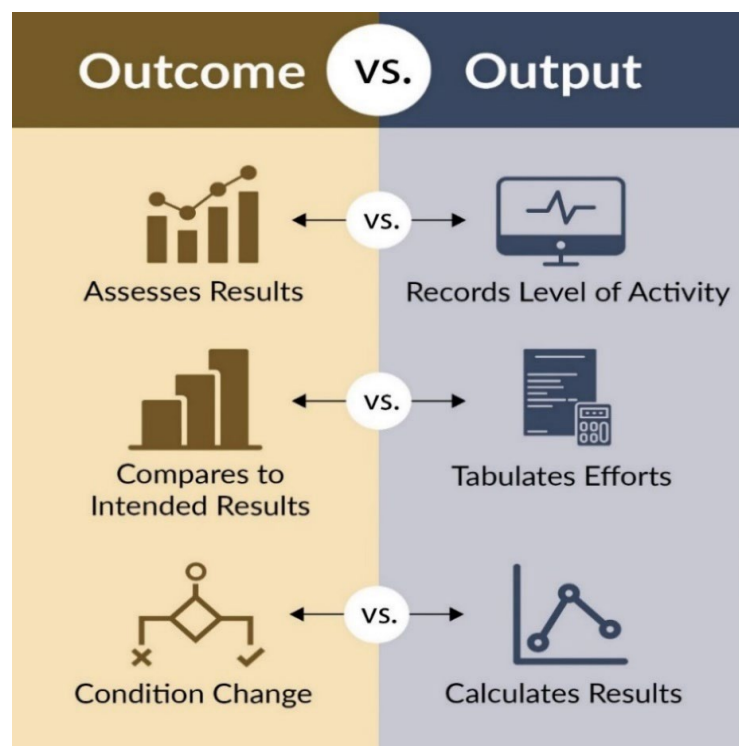


Figure 4: Differences Between Output and Outcome Performance Measures. Figure by OIG.

¹⁵ See Exhibit A for a list of the 12 internal measures.

¹⁶ As defined in USDA's FY 2023 Performance Plan, a target is a quantifiable level of achievement that is planned to measure progress towards a strategic objective.

¹⁷ An *output measure* is the tabulation, calculation, or recording of an activity or effort that can be expressed quantitatively or qualitatively.

¹⁸ An *outcome measure* is the assessment of a program activity's results compared to its intended purpose.

The Climate Hubs documented in its 2020-2025 strategic plan that outcome measurements were not included because they require longer-term strategies. Further, a Climate Hubs official stated that having a small number of national office staff makes it challenging to summarize the outcomes of all the regional Hubs' accomplishments. We acknowledge the Climate Hubs' challenge; but without establishing and reporting on outcome-based performance measures, the Climate Hubs cannot fully evaluate the effectiveness of whether the Hubs achieved its strategic goals, including goal 1. The Climate Hubs should perform an analysis and develop an approach to identify outcome measures.

The Performance Measures Do Not Align to Strategic Goal 1

OMB Circular A-11 states that an agency's performance plan should align to its strategic goals and explain how those goals will be achieved. In USDA's FY 2023 Performance Plan, the Climate Hubs presented to its stakeholders a KPI that reported the "number of stakeholders supported through Climate Hubs capacity-building activities." However, we found the KPI does not clearly inform stakeholders how working lands' resilience and productivity is enhanced. A Climate Hubs official explained that the KPI is the sum of two measures: (1) total number of workshop and technical demonstrations; and (2) total number of webinar attendees. However, stakeholders are not informed that the KPI is a summary measure, and it does not show how it aligns with the five measures listed in the Climate Hubs' 2020-2025 strategic plan or the 12 measures tracked internally by the Climate Hubs. Moreover, the KPI does not differentiate to stakeholders how the Climate Hubs is specifically accomplishing each strategic goal.

Climate Hubs Need to Improve its Communication of Performance Results to Stakeholders

The Climate Hubs' annual and quarterly accomplishment reports¹⁹ do not display its performance measures or describe how those measures contribute to the Climate Hubs' strategic goals and objectives. According to a Climate Hubs official, the internal measures often address multiple strategic goals and are an information gathering tool used to collect regional accomplishments. This official further explained that accomplishment reporting is a balance between illustrating the Climate Hubs' impact with stories and reporting on its measures.²⁰ We also found the Climate Hubs' performance reports did not convey its accomplishments in a way that correlates them to the strategic goals. As a result, it is challenging for stakeholders to measure the Climate Hubs' progress in achieving its strategic goals without expressing its correlation to the strategic plan.

Without implementing these improvements to its measures and accomplishment reporting, the Climate Hubs cannot sufficiently demonstrate to stakeholders how its performance achieves the desired result of its goals, including the enhancing working lands' resilience and productivity

¹⁹ We reviewed the selected Climate Hubs' annual and quarterly accomplishment reports issued in FYs 2022, 2023, or both. We did not evaluate the Climate Hubs' annual accomplishment report for FY 2023 because it was not completed at the time of our analysis. Although issued in April 2024, we found it did not change our conclusion that the Climate Hubs' performance measures should be communicated.

²⁰ The Climate Hubs official explained that the stories in the accomplishment reports are descriptions of the Climate Hubs' activities.

goal we evaluated. Climate Hubs officials generally agreed with our finding and conclusions and stated this is an opportunity to implement OIG’s recommendations, as the Climate Hubs’ five-year review process is underway, and the Climate Hubs will update the strategic plan in the year 2025.

Recommendation 1

Establish measurable targets and timeframes for all performance measures to ensure compliance with GPRAMA and OMB Circular A-11 requirements.

Agency Response

In their August 28, 2024, response, the agency officials stated:

The USDA Climate Hubs agree with this recommendation. USDA Climate Hubs will establish measurable targets and timeframes for all performance measures to ensure compliance with GPRAMA and OMB Circular A-11 requirements.

The USDA Climate Hubs provided an estimated completion date of June 17, 2025.

OIG Position

We accept management decision on this recommendation.

Recommendation 2

Perform an analysis of data and develop an approach to identify intended outcomes for the Climate Hubs’ goals. Based on this approach, develop outcome-based measures to adequately assess the Climate Hubs’ progress in meeting its strategic goals.

Agency Response

The USDA Climate Hubs agree with this recommendation. USDA Climate Hubs will assess the effectiveness of metrics and identify the best measures of intended outcomes for the Climate Hubs’ Strategic Goals. Based on this approach, the Hubs will develop outcome-based measures to adequately assess the Climate Hubs’ progress in meeting its strategic goals.

The USDA Climate Hubs provided an estimated completion date of June 17, 2025.

OIG Position

We accept management decision on this recommendation.

Recommendation 3

Develop KPI(s) that clearly align(s) with the strategic goals to encompass the Climate Hubs' performance measures.

Agency Response

The USDA Climate Hubs agree with this recommendation. Subsequent to a review of metrics and best measures for synthesizing progress toward Strategic Goals, the USDA Climate Hubs will develop KPI(s) that align(s) with the strategic goals and encompass the Climate Hubs' performance measures.

The USDA Climate Hubs provided an estimated completion date of June 17, 2025.

OIG Position

We accept management decision on this recommendation.

Recommendation 4

Revise the performance reporting process to follow Federal requirements on informing stakeholders how the Climate Hubs' strategic goals are accomplished.

Agency Response

The USDA Climate Hubs agree with this recommendation. The Hubs will incorporate lessons learned from review process and integrate any new measures developed so that the performance reporting process follows Federal requirements on informing stakeholders how the Climate Hubs' strategic goals are accomplished.

The USDA Climate Hubs provided an estimated completion date of June 17, 2025.

OIG Position

We accept management decision on this recommendation.

Scope and Methodology

We conducted an inspection to determine whether USDA Climate Hubs developed performance measures for strategic goal 1. The scope of our work included a review of the Climate Hubs' performance measures for FYs 2022 and 2023. We performed our fieldwork virtually with the Climate Hubs' national officials and members of the Executive Committee. We conducted fieldwork from November 2023 through June 2024. We discussed the results of our inspection with Climate Hubs officials on July 15, 2024, and included their responses, as appropriate.

To accomplish our inspection objective, we:



Reviewed applicable laws and guidance to gain an understanding of Federal performance reporting requirements.



Examined USDA's annual performance plans to identify performance measures related to the Climate Hubs' strategic goal 1.



Interviewed Climate Hubs national office staff, including prior national officials, along with members of the Executive Committee, and other USDA officials about the Climate Hubs' performance measures related to strategic goal 1.



Reviewed documentation from the Climate Hubs on its internally tracked measures related to strategic goal 1.



Analyzed the Climate Hubs' strategic plan for 2020-2025 to identify performance measures related to strategic goal 1.



Evaluated selected Climate Hubs' accomplishment reports from FYs 2022 and 2023 to identify performance measures related to strategic goal 1.

We conducted this inspection in accordance with the Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency's *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation*.²¹ These standards require that we obtain sufficient and appropriate evidence to support our findings and provide a reasonable basis for our conclusions based on our inspection objective. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions and recommendations based on our review.

²¹ Council of the Inspectors General on Integrity and Efficiency, *Quality Standards for Inspection and Evaluation* (Dec. 2020).

Abbreviations

ARS	Agricultural Research Service
FS	Forest Service
FY	fiscal year
GAO	United States Government Accountability Office
GPRA	Government Performance and Results Act
GPRAMA	Government Performance and Results Act Modernization Act
KPI	key performance indicator
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
OCE.....	Office of the Chief Economist
OIG	Office of Inspector General
OMB	Office of Management and Budget
USDA.....	United States Department of Agriculture

Exhibit A: Climate Hubs' Internal Performance Measures

Exhibit A provides a visual presentation of USDA Climate Hubs' 12 measures that capture the regional Climate Hubs' accomplishments for quarterly and annual reporting purposes during FYs 2022 and 2023. The Climate Hubs use these measures internally to capture and track its activities and accomplishments.²²



²² This graphic was created by OIG based on information obtained from Climate Hubs officials.

**USDA Climate Hubs'
Response to Inspection Report**



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

Janet Sorensen
Assistant Inspector General for Audit
Office of the Inspector General (OIG)

Dear Director Janet:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) appreciates the opportunity to respond to the U.S. Office of the Inspector General (OIG) Official Draft report, Climate Hubs: Enhancing Working Lands' Resilience and Productivity – Official Draft Report, Audit Number 50801-0001-22.

This was a multi-agency audit that includes Agriculture Research Service (ARS), Office of the Chief Economist (OCE), Forest Service (FS), and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). NRCS was identified as the lead agency.

Attached is the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Response to the four (4) recommendations identified in the OIG Official Draft Report.

If you require additional information, please contact Michell Dunn, Acting Branch Chief, External Audits and Investigations, at 202-401-0584.

Sincerely,

/s/

Gloria Montano Greene
Deputy Under Secretary
Farm Production and Conservation

Attachments



Climate Hubs: Enhancing Working Lands' Resilience and Productivity

OIG Inspection #50801-0001-22

USDA Climate Hubs Lead Agencies' Response to the Official Draft

Executive Summary

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) reviewed whether the USDA Climate Hubs developed performance measures to achieve the goal of enhancing working lands' resilience and productivity.

This response is a concurrence of the principal supporting agencies and offices of the USDA Climate Hubs. Specific responses and actions of the Climate Hubs identified here will be accomplished by the supporting agencies through the Climate Hubs' Executive Committee, National Office, and the Regional Hub staff. The 10 Regional USDA Climate Hubs are individually led by staff from the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) and Forest Service (FS) and include staff from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The USDA Climate Hubs have a National Office comprised of a National Lead and National Coordinator. Oversight is provided by a multi-agency Executive Committee which is led by a rotating chair and a permanent co-chair from the Office of the Chief Economist (OCE).

The USDA Climate Hubs have begun a 5-year review process, and the recommendations from OIG will be included in the review. The next 5-year strategic planning process for the USDA Climate Hubs will occur in FY 2025. The next strategic plan for the USDA Climate Hubs will reflect the OIG recommendations.

Findings

OIG determined that the USDA Climate Hubs' performance measures related to Strategic Goal 1 (enhancing working lands' resilience and productivity) were insufficient. Although the Climate Hubs developed measures to track their Strategic Goal 1 accomplishments, OIG found that these measures did not fully comply with the requirements of the Government Performance and Results Act Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRAMA) and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-11. Specifically, the Climate Hubs had not designed their measures to include targets and timeframes for completion or incorporate some outcome-based measures. In addition, the Climate Hubs did not clearly communicate how outcome-based measures aligned with the Climate Hubs' strategic goals in their plans and reports. As a result, OIG determined that the Climate Hubs cannot sufficiently demonstrate to stakeholders how their performance will achieve the desired result of enhancing working lands' resilience and productivity.

Multi-Agency Response to Recommendations

The USDA Climate Hubs accept OIG inspection Recommendations 1 through 4.

Recommendation 1: Establish measurable targets and timeframes for all performance measures to ensure compliance with GPRAMA and OMB Circular A-11 requirements.

USDA Climate Hubs Response: The USDA Climate Hubs agree with this recommendation. USDA Climate Hubs will establish measurable targets and timeframes for all performance measures to ensure compliance with GPRAMA and OMB Circular A-11 requirements.

Estimated Completion Date: The estimated completion date is June 17, 2025.

Recommendation 2: Perform an analysis of data and develop an approach to identify intended outcomes for the Climate Hubs' goals. Based on this approach, develop outcome-based measures to adequately assess the Climate Hubs' progress in meeting its strategic goals.

USDA Climate Hubs Response: The USDA Climate Hubs agree with this recommendation. USDA Climate Hubs will assess the effectiveness of metrics and identify the best measures of intended outcomes for the Climate Hubs' Strategic Goals. Based on this approach, the Hubs will develop outcome-based measures to adequately assess the Climate Hubs' progress in meeting its strategic goals.

Estimated Completion Date: The estimated completion date is June 17, 2025.

Recommendation 3: Develop Key Performance Indicator(s) (KPI(s)) that clearly align(s) with the strategic goals to encompass the Climate Hubs' performance measures.

USDA Climate Hubs Response: The USDA Climate Hubs agree with this recommendation. Subsequent to a review of metrics and best measures for synthesizing progress toward Strategic Goals, the USDA Climate Hubs will develop KPI(s) that align(s) with the strategic goals and encompass the Climate Hubs' performance measures.

Estimated Completion Date: The estimated completion date is June 17, 2025.

Recommendation 4: Revise the performance reporting process to follow Federal requirements on informing stakeholders how the Climate Hubs' strategic goals are accomplished.

USDA Climate Hubs Response: The USDA Climate Hubs agree with this recommendation. The Hubs will incorporate lessons learned from review process and integrate any new measures developed so that the performance reporting process follows Federal requirements on informing stakeholders how the Climate Hubs' strategic goals are accomplished.

Estimated Completion Date: The estimated completion date is June 17, 2025.

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