

Leveraging Action Agenda Topic Workshops for HSIL Operationalizing

Building upon conversations initiated through the Action Agenda update process, the HSIL will use the spring and summer 2025 HSIAT meetings to receive input on opportunities to implement and operationalize the Habitat Implementation Strategies.

Background

The first phase of the Action Agenda update were Topic-specific workshops focused on identifying the most important actions to update for the 2026-2030 Action Agenda. HSIL asked HSIAT members to participate in at least one of the five Habitat Topic updates through pre-work and workshop participation. This adaptive management discussion also serves as an opportunity to identify places for HSIL to continue to advance the Habitat Implementation Strategies. To leverage this discussion beyond the plan update, HSIL asked HSIAT members to also take note of opportunities in the following areas:

1. Funding Opportunities Aligned with EPA 2.0 Funding Guidance to the SILs

HSIL has allocated available funding under the current EPA cooperative agreement. The HSIAT can gather information during the Action Agenda Topic updates on potential funding areas that advance the Topics and Habitat Implementation Strategies aligned with the SIL funding niche in the future. The [EPA 2.0 Funding Guidance to the SILs](#) describes priorities for funding on pages 2-3 under the current funding model. While these may change, they do provide a good overview of the types of work that have been well suited to these flexible funds.

1. Opportunities to support partner convening

HSIL has the capacity at small and large scales to bring together and support partners to learn, brainstorm, and problem-solve together. We are interested in HSIAT member observations of areas where over the next one to five years HSIL can be a value-add and leverage our capacity to benefit the recovery community.

2. Planning opportunities

HSIL anticipates leveraging the Action Agenda update to update the aligned Habitat Implementation Strategies. We anticipate the Action Agenda update may reveal opportunities to align or integrate across plans, evaluate new strategies for development, or fill planning gaps. HSIAT member observations will help HSIL track and evaluate future strategic planning opportunities.

Goals and Timeline

Goals for April, May, and June HSIAT Meetings:

HSIAT members discuss near-term (next year) and longer-term (1-5 year) opportunities to implement and operationalize the Habitat Implementation Strategies through SIL work. Near-term opportunities should focus on non-funding opportunities that the current HSIL staff can consider in their work to operationalize and update the Habitat Implementation Strategies before June 2026. Longer-term opportunities include ripe investment priorities for EPA funding as well as convening

and planning opportunities that can be recommended to future SILs funded under the EPA 3.0 Funding Model. EPA intends to compete the next SIL Funding Model spring-summer 2025. More information on the proposed EPA 3.0 SIL Funding Model is available in the EPA [briefing memo](#) and [presentation](#) for the March 2025 Leadership Council meeting.

- April Topics: Floodplains and Estuaries and Shoreline Armoring (Healthy Shorelines)
- **May Topics:** Three Action Agenda topics under the Land Development and Cover Implementation Strategy (Smart Growth, Forest Land Protection, Agricultural Land Protection)
- June Topics: In-person. Building upon the April and May discussions for the other Habitat Implementation Strategies.

Goals for July and August Meetings.

HSIAT members will be asked to refine a list of opportunities to advance the Habitat Implementation Strategies and to develop and endorse a recommendation to future Strategic Initiative Leads under the EPA 3.0 Funding model.

May Meeting Preparation

HSIAT members should read the materials listed below under homework. This includes the updated Action Agenda topics as well as summaries of HSIL work to-date to implement the Implementation Strategies.

HSIAT members should come prepared to discuss opportunities for Land Development and Cover under the three HSIL work areas described above (funding, convening, planning) drawing upon this memo, the homework, their expertise, and observations from the Smart Growth, Forest Land Protection, and Agricultural Land Protection Action Agenda Topic workshops.

There will be two discussions. The first is an open reflection from the three workshops across all three topics. The second is a focused facilitation exercise that will focus on three of the Smart Growth Topic strategies.

HSIAT Member Open Reflection: Action Agenda Workshops for Smart Growth, Agricultural Land Protection, Forest Land Protection – Prompts

- What are HSIAT member reflections from attending one or more of the three land-use related workshops above?
- What was surprising?
- What were you most excited about?
- Were there specific opportunities for knowledge sharing, coordination, or problem-solving that emerged in the discussion?

1-2-4-All Facilitation Prompts

- Which actions stand out having opportunities for HSIL (funding, convening, strategic planning)?

- What are ripest actions (or specific element of an action) in the next three years?

Homework for May:

- Read the [HSIL May 2025 Briefing](#) (this document)
- Read the [Executive Summary](#) of the Land Development and Cover Implementation Strategy
- Read the draft of the [Smart Growth updated Topic](#)
- Read the draft of the [Forest Land Protection updated Topic](#)
- Read the draft of the [Agricultural Land Protection updated Topic](#)
- Read [Successful Implementation of Smart Growth, Forest Land Protection, and Agricultural Land Protection](#) under HSIL 1.0 and 2.0
- (Optional) Read the Freshwater Quality Implementation Strategy [Watershed Planning Strategy](#) (p. 44-49)

April Meeting

- Meeting notes from the [April 2025 meeting](#)
- Overview slides from the [April 2025 meeting](#)