more comprehensive information on the environmental performance of products.

3. Medium term implementation. In addition to completing the aforementioned pilots that have already been initiated, EPA requests that Executive agencies select voluntary acquisitions that would become the next wave of pilots and which would also benefit from lessons learned from those case studies already underway or completed. These voluntary pilots will be implemented in three phases.

Phase I—Agencies will identify possible pilot projects. Based on their selections, additional guidance targeting specific product categories will be developed and published. EPA will support these pilots, providing overall coordination and technical assistance, as resources allow. The product category-specific guidances will include the following:

- A qualitative description of the most important environmental performance characteristics for that product category; this will involve a scoping process that will include technical experts both inside and outside the government.
- A description of standard methods by which those characteristics can be measured.

Institutionalizing the purchase of environmentally preferable products in the long run requires that the efforts on the part of the Executive agencies not end when these pilots are completed. So that agencies will continue to acquire "green" products, EPA will coordinate an effort to develop additional guidance documents for product categories that will become the subjects of future pilots. These guidance documents, similar to the product category-specific guidances described above, will describe environmental performance characteristics and measurement methods, and will be developed through a process involving technical experts both inside and outside the government. The identity of the product categories to be targeted for additional guidance will be determined at a future date, and will be influenced by suggestions that are submitted during the public comment period on this proposed guidance.

Phase II—Applying the product categoryspecific guidance to the acquisition process, agencies will actually purchase environmentally preferable products. While the acquisition strategy and method are left to the discretion of the purchasing agency, Executive agencies are asked to select the procurement strategy that:

- Maximizes the number of environmentally preferable product choices available to the purchasing Agency.
- Promotes competition across products in terms of environmental performance.
- Stimulates product and process innovation and continuous improvement.
- Allows for the consideration of local environmental conditions.
- Promotes a definition of environmentally preferable products that can improve over time.

Phase III—Upon completion of the pilot project, a compilation and analysis of lessons learned in the acquisition process, data gathered about product categories and results of the pilots will be assembled. The results of these joint efforts will be shared with other agencies through the Electronic Acquisition Network process. EPA believes that the lessons learned from these efforts will help to refine the concepts and principles contained in the general guidance and thereby ensure the effective implementation of the mandates in the Executive Order.

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