

AB 32 Environmental Justice Advisory Committee Funding Proposal Overview of Technical Assistance Needs and Scope of Work

January 2022

Summary

In 2006, California adopted California Global Warming Solutions Act (AB 32) which set targets for the State to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and established California as a national leader in the fight to address climate change. The California Air Resources Board (CARB) was given the responsibility of developing a Scoping Plan to serve as a roadmap of how the State will achieve the targets set by AB 32. To ensure the needs of residents from environmental justice communities were included, AB 32 also established an Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (EJAC) to advise CARB in the development of the Scoping Plan. In 2008, CARB adopted its first Scoping Plan which by statute must be updated every five years. CARB is currently working on developing the 2022 Updated Scoping Plan.

In the summer of 2021, CARB convened the current EJAC, composed of 19 environmental justice and labor leaders from across the State. To strengthen the ability of the EJAC members to provide meaningful technical input into the Scoping Plan the EJAC members have identified various areas where they would like independent third-party technical assistance. Technical assistance needs fall into three categories: Technical, Policy and Coordination and are outlined in detail in this document.

The EJAC co-chairs are engaging in dialogue with potential funders to identify resources for them to be able to meet their technical assistance needs. There is broad agreement that any funding for technical assistance should benefit the entire EJAC, and ideally can be managed by a neutral third-party. Additionally, the EJAC wants to be clear that funding to support their technical assistance needs should be additive, and not be given in place of existing funding being received by organizations participating in the EJAC.

Background

The California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32) was the first major legislation focused on combating climate change by setting aggressive goals for California to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. AB 32 also directed the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to develop a Scoping Plan to provide a roadmap for how the State can meet its near- and long-term statewide GHG emissions reduction targets. The Scoping Plan includes a suite of policies intended to help the State achieve its reductions through a combination of incentives, regulations, and carbon pricing. In 2008, CARB approved its first Scoping Plan which according to AB 32 must be updated every five years. To date CARB has completed two updates to the Scoping Plan—in 2013 and 2017—and is currently in the process of developing the 2022 Updated Scoping Plan.

AB 32 also established the Environmental Justice Advisory Committee (EJAC), composed of representatives from communities most impacted by air pollution, to advise CARB in the development of the Scoping Plan. CARB has convened an EJAC for each of the Scoping Plan updates, appointing new members every five years. In previous years, the EJAC members have developed

recommendations for CARB on how the Scoping Plan should benefit and prevent harms to environmental justice communities. Serving on the EJAC requires a significant investment of time and energy from EJAC members who participate in regular meetings, public workshops, work group meetings, and joint meetings with the members of the CARB Board, in addition to engaging members of their respective communities to inform their recommendations for the Scoping Plan.

Overview of current EJAC

In the summer of 2021, CARB convened the EJAC to advise the development of the 2022 Updated Scoping Plan. The current EJAC is composed of 19 members representing environmental justice organizations, communities, and labor groups from leaders across the state (full roster included below). At this writing, CARB is actively working to recruit an additional member to represent the perspective of Indigenous tribal groups. The EJAC selected three of its members—Martha Dina Argüello, with Physicians for Social Responsibility-Los Angeles, Sharifa Taylor with Communities for a Better Environment in Oakland and Richmond, and Paulina Torres with the Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment in Delano—to serve as co-chairs of the EJAC. The co-chairs represent geographic diversity of Southern, Northern, and Central California, and play a key role in working with CARB staff to develop meeting agendas and assist with coordination of the EJAC. In addition to the co-chairs, the EJAC has developed eight working groups focused on community engagement and key sectors and issue areas. Ensuring that the EJAC’s recommendations are integrated into the 2022 Updated Scoping Plan, and not just included as a separate appendix, is a high priority for EJAC members.

In the brief time the current EJAC has been convened it has faced multiple challenges. Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, all EJAC meetings have been held virtually, limiting the interactions between EJAC members, staff, and stakeholders. Additionally, serving on the EJAC requires a significant investment of time which is challenging for most of the members who have full-time jobs. CARB has also set an aggressive timeline which aims to have a completed Scoping Plan before the Board by December 2022.

These challenges are further compounded by the technical and complex subject matter being presented to the EJAC for input. For example, the Scoping Plan depends heavily on scenarios modeled by CARB staff and its contractors using complex energy, health, and economic models such as PATHWAYS, BENMAP, and IMPLAN. The outcomes of these models can vary greatly based on the inputs, which the EJAC spent considerable time and energy weighing in on. Furthermore, with the 2022 Scoping Plan Update’s focus on getting California to be ‘carbon neutral’ by mid-century there is a lot of debate about the role that new, unproven and risky technologies like engineered carbon removal, also known as Carbon Capture, Use and Sequestration (CCUS) will play. For many EJAC members, this is their first time learning about these technologies, but they have unanimously expressed that CCUS should not be used as part of any of California’s climate change or emissions reductions strategies.

The EJAC has expressed a clear desire for independent third-party technical assistance providers to help them unpack many of these complex topics and properly assess the impact they may have on the communities they represent, as well as the feasibility of climate solutions that can advance environmental justice, social equity and community health.

EJAC Technical Assistance Needs

To better understand the EJAC's technical assistance needs, the co-chairs developed a survey, which was sent to the EJAC members. The following overview of the EJAC's technical assistance needs is based on the responses to that survey. In their survey responses, the EJAC members identified challenges and specific areas where technical assistance would be beneficial to advancing their work. The technical assistance needs fall into three main categories: technical, policy and coordination. It should be noted that CARB has also committed limited direct technical assistance and funding for community engagement as well as providing staff support to the EJAC and its working groups.

Technical expertise: Modeling and Research

As previously discussed, given the role of the modeling tools in evaluating potential policies to be included in the Scoping Plan, having direct support from independent experts that are familiar with these tools is a top priority for EJAC members. CARB is working with Energy & Environmental Economics (E3) to run four scenarios using PATHWAYS to evaluate their GHG emissions and energy use impacts. The results from PATHWAYS will feed into a model of health and air quality impacts conducted by UC Irvine using BENMAP. Lastly, Rhodium group will conduct an economic analysis using the IMPLAN model. CARB is also modeling emissions sources and sinks from California's 'natural and working lands' as part of a separate modeling effort.

While initial inputs for the four scenarios have already been submitted, it will be helpful for EJAC to have assistance evaluating the initial outcomes, developing recommendations for the Draft Scoping Plan by the end of February or beginning of March, and developing proposed changes upon review of the Draft Scoping Plan in the Summer of 2022. In addition to these models, the EJAC has had multiple conversations about the potential to have experts assist with the development of environmental justice analysis of each scenario and development of an EJAC "Environmental Justice and Just Transition" scenario.

Many EJAC members expressed a desire for assistance in understanding the key economic sectors and new technologies discussed in the Scoping Plan and in identifying EJ solutions. Carbon capture, use and sequestration, the transition to hydrogen, and biofuels are all key topics of interest. The top eight areas identified by EJAC members are as follows:

1. Carbon Capture, Utilization, Sequestration and Carbon Dioxide Removal
2. Oil and Gas Extraction
3. Food Production and Farming
4. Building Energy Efficiency
5. Stone, Clay, Glass Cement
6. Smart Growth/Vehicle Miles Traveled
7. Electricity Generation
8. Building Decarbonization for new and existing residential buildings

Other top areas of interest for research include 'natural and working lands', short lived climate pollutants, as well as an evaluation of the progress made by policies adopted in previous Scoping Plans. There is also an ongoing interest in evaluating how the current cap-and-trade system is impacting environmental justice communities.

Policy

In addition to research, the EJAC expressed strong interest in having support with a) understanding existing statutes influencing the Scoping Plan, b) evaluating policies proposed by CARB, and c) developing the EJAC's recommendations and d) working with CARB staff to ensure EJAC's recommendations are integrated into the Scoping Plan.

Key policy areas important to the EJAC include ensuring the Scoping Plan results in improved air quality and health outcomes in environmental justice communities, as well as supporting a just economic transition for displaced workers while generating new opportunities and economic benefits for frontline community members.

Coordination

Having a person to assist with the coordination of the technical assistance and support of EJAC members has also been identified as a critical need. The coordinator could also assist with communication between CARB staff and EJAC and serve as the point of contact between other technical assistance providers and the EJAC.

Proposed staffing would include one coordinator, a policy expert who can also assist with the writing, and contracts with various key topical experts.

Funding Oversight

In making this request for technical assistance, the EJAC's leaders want to be clear that funding for technical assistance should benefit the EJAC as a whole and not an individual organization. Second, the hope is that these funds will be additive to the field and not supplant existing funding that individual groups may be receiving for their work on climate and environmental justice issues. Additionally, to avoid perceived conflicts, it is the preference of the EJAC leadership for funding to be pooled and managed by a neutral third-party entity, like a trusted community foundation such as the Rose Foundation for Communities and the Environment or Liberty Hill Foundation.

AB32 Environmental Justice Advisory Committee

Name	Organization
Martha Dina Argüello *	Physicians for Social Responsibility
David Campbell	United Steelworkers
Connie Cho	Communities for a Better Environment
Dillon Delvo	Little Manila Rising
Demi Espinoza	Environmental Fellow Program/National Parks Conservation Association
Angel Garcia	Californians for Pesticide Reform
Catherine Garoupa White	Central Valley Air Quality Coalition
Georgette Gómez	Toyon Strategies
Kevin Hamilton	Central California Asthma Collaborative
John Harriel Jr.	International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
Thomas Helme	Valley Improvement Projects
John Kevin Jefferson III	Deep Medicine Circle

Mayor Rey León	LEAP Institute
Neena Mohan	California Environmental Justice Alliance
Luis Olmedo	Comité Civico del Valle
Amee Raval	Asian Pacific Environmental Network
Sharifa Taylor *	Communities for a Better Environment
Paulina Torres *	Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment

2022 Scoping Plan Update

* Indicates Co-chairs

Funds needed
 Writing Support 50 k
 Coordinator Support 30K
 Policy Development Support
 Training and TA 100,000

Tasks	cost	
Writing support	30K	the co chairs need a writer to pull together recommendations
Coordination	25 K	We need someone not on the EJAC to coordinate comments,
training and technical assistance multiple contractors	50 K	Given the time constraints this will be need to be delivered via one on one sessions, zoom calls and written materials pre recorded sessions and one on one with experts
Community Engagement	150,000	support for EJAC and Non EJAC members to engage in the scoping plan process and ground truth the plan