

Cal.Pub.Res.Code § 71080

The Legislature finds and declares the following:

(a) Traditionally, many of California's environmental programs have assessed their performance using measures of activity, including, for example, the number of permits granted or regulatory standards adopted. Addressing the complex environmental challenges of the 21st century will require new approaches that rely on better information from objective and scientifically based environmental indicators. Over the years, substantial efforts have been devoted toward this end, yet historically there have been very few meaningful, objective measures with which to determine the environmental impacts of these efforts.

(b) The California Environmental Protection Agency has made a commitment to move away from measures of activity, and instead focus on measurable environmental results to judge program performance. To support this commitment, the California Environmental Protection Agency established the Environmental Protection Indicators for California (EPIC) Project in 2000, and charged EPIC with developing and maintaining a comprehensive set of environmental indicators, which are scientific measurements of environmental conditions and trends. To ensure that the development of indicators was based on sound science, the California Environmental Protection Agency designated its Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment to lead the effort. The California Environmental Protection Agency, working in partnership with the Resources Agency and in cooperation with the Department of Health Services, released a report containing the initial set of 84 environmental indicators in April 2002.

(c) Objective and scientifically based environmental indicators improve our understanding of the environment and how human activities and other factors can influence it. The indicators establish a scientific basis for evaluating the effectiveness of environmental programs and identifying the need for specific actions to improve environmental conditions throughout the state and the disproportionate impact on low-income communities and communities of color. Decisions to create, modify, or eliminate California Environmental Protection Agency policies and programs need to be driven by information reflected by environmental indicators; and, to the extent feasible, budget decisions should include a reference as to how the proposed change is intended to impact a relevant environmental indicator.

(d) To ensure the credibility of objective and scientifically based environmental indicators, a qualified scientific body with expertise in environmental and public health protection should provide input into the selection and development of the indicators.

(e) To ensure the relevance of the environmental indicators, input should be sought from a broad range of stakeholders.

(f) It is the intent of the Legislature that the Secretary for Environmental Protection, the Secretary of the Resources Agency, and the Director of the Department of Health Services in conjunction with the boards, departments, and offices in their respective agencies, use environmental indicators, where applicable, in the development of the budget proposals for the 2005-06 fiscal year and each fiscal year thereafter.

(Added by Stats.2003, c. 664 (A.B.1360), § 1.)

Current as of January 18, 2019