



# Equity and Environmental Justice

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 Pacific States/ British Columbia Oil Spill  
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# Environmental Justice Defined

## US EPA: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

*Fair treatment and meaningful involvement* of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

## CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL JUSTICE)

As defined in the ESJ Action Plan: predominantly communities of color or low-income communities that are underrepresented in the policy setting or decision-making process, subject to a disproportionate impact from one or more environmental hazards, and are likely to experience disparate implementation of environmental regulations and socioeconomic investments in their communities.

## CAL EPA: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

- Top 25% highest scoring census tracts of CalEnviroScreen, Version 3.0;
- tracts that scored in the highest 5% of CalEnviroScreen's Pollution Burden indicator but did not have an overall CalEnviroScreen score.
- Out of the state's 8,035 census tracts, 2,005 tracts were designated as disadvantaged, including 22 high pollution census tracts without an overall CalEnviroScreen score.

# Characteristics of Equitable Engagement



Be inclusive and culturally connected.

One size does not fit all



Ensure accessibility and linguistic responsiveness.



Make information easy to find, understand, and use.

# Information sharing

- Short term
- Marketing
- What can A do for B?
- Transactional
- One-directional



# Two-way communication

- Long-Term
- Relationship Building
- What can A and B do together?
- Community Benefits
- Cyclical

# Equity Assessment



Identify the  
purpose of the  
engagement



Identify  
stakeholders and  
CA tribes



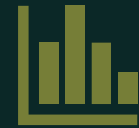
Engage  
stakeholders and  
CA tribes



Consider  
impacts



Understand risks



Report  
Outcomes

# Equity Assessment



## 1. Identify the purpose of the engagement?

- What does the effort seek to accomplish?
- Is this related to a funding priority or partner deliverable?
- How urgently does it need to happen?
- What's at stake if we don't do this?

## 2. Identify Stakeholders and Tribes

- Who is likely to be impacted (positive and/or negative) in the development and implementation of this effort?
- Are there impacted disadvantaged communities? If so, where?
- Are there opportunities to involve underrepresented individuals and/or groups in the development or implementation of this effort?

## 3. Engage Stakeholders and Tribes

- How will diverse individuals and groups be engaged with to discuss the issues related to this effort?
- Have those that are potentially the most adversely affected by the effort been consulted, meaningfully involved, and authentically represented?

## 4. Consider positive or adverse impacts

- What equity related positive impacts could result from this decision? (ex: reduce pollution in DAC, increase public access to green space)
- How would this effort improve or impair the social, economic, or environmental conditions of the community?
- What adverse impacts or unintended consequences could result from this effort?
- If there are adverse impacts or unintended consequences, what mitigation measures or feedback processes could prevent or minimize adverse impacts?

## 5. Understand Risks

- Do we have a solution that can help counteract any systemic inequities that may be present in this situation?
- If not, should we still proceed? Justification
- What is at risk if we do proceed (both for the issue and for the organization)?
- What is at risk if we do not proceed (both for the issue and for the organization)?

## 6. Report Outcomes (For after a decision is made)

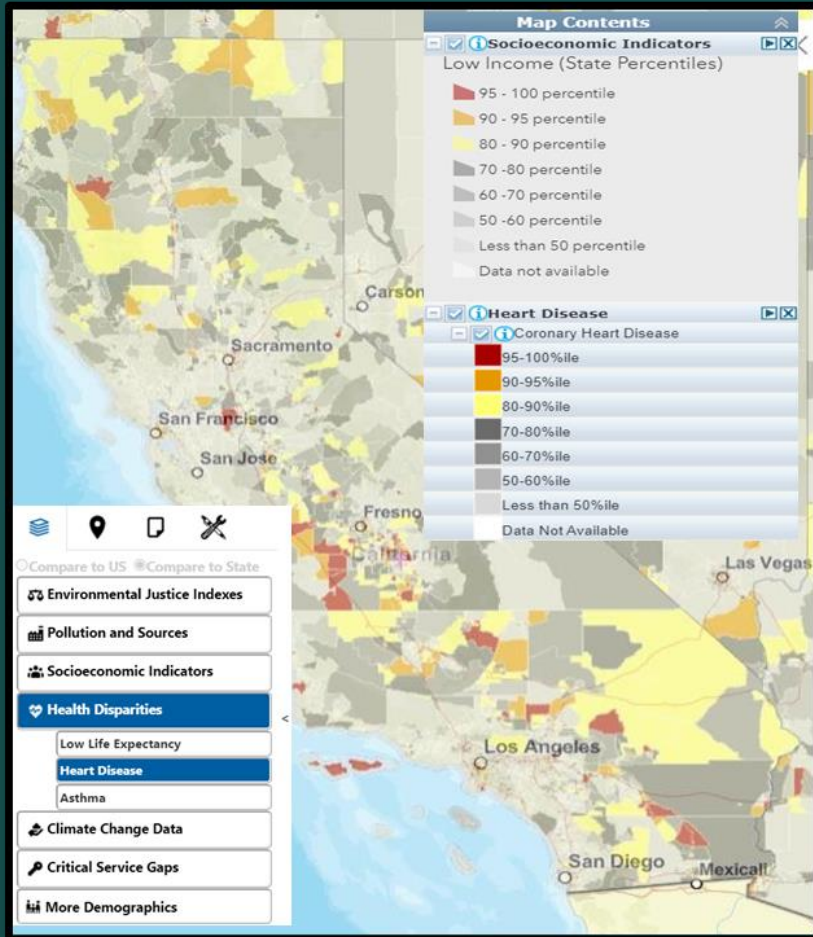
- What were the lessons learned so that we can continue to improve the process?
- Are there standards that can be developed or related best practices? If so, what?



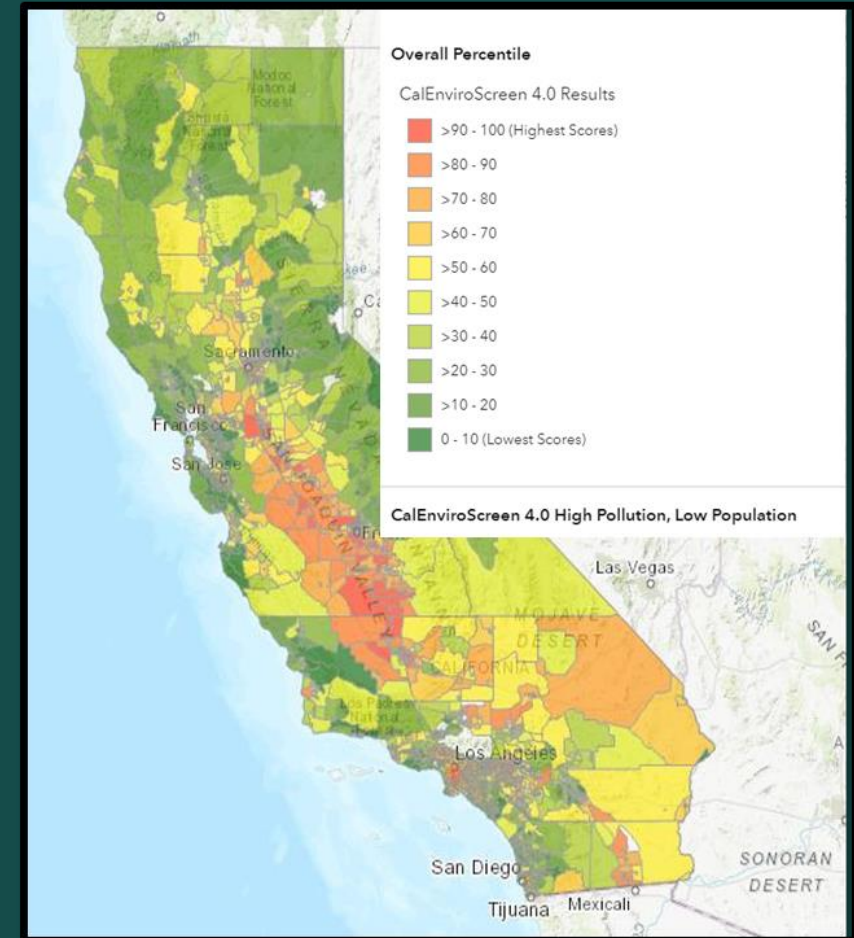
# Tools, Indicators, and Metrics



## EJ SCREEN- FEDERAL



## CALENVIROSCREEN



# Strategies For Equitable Engagement

**Know your audience: Your audience should influence the words, style, tone, and format that you use in any communication.**

- Who are the community leaders?
- How much do they know about your subject?
- What do they care about?
- How do they get their information?
- How much time do they have?

**Dedicate staff to translating multi-media scientific data (including air, water, and sediment and fish tissue) into plain language.**

**Be aware of how oil spills have previously impacted communities?**

- Are there disparate impacts (health, economic, access/enjoyment)?
- How can this inform responses)?

**Work directly with tribes**

**Translate scientific information into plain language communications materials**

Explain the environmental sampling and monitoring data collection conducted related to the oil spill

**Develop information and tools needed to make sound decisions regarding water quality, air quality and seafood safety**

Can be accomplished through the creation and distribution of a "Citizen's Guide to educational fact sheets and multi-media material.



# Strategies For Equitable Engagement

## **Use Inclusive Language (gender neutral terms, people with disabilities)**

- Refer to people as people, for example, “people without housing” and emphasize the problematic systems that put those people in those positions.

## **Create Accessible Outreach Materials**

- Use language that’s accessible to folks outside of the space and avoid using jargon.
- Accommodate different learning styles.
- Identify universal symbols (can be a collaborative effort for this group if none already exist).

## **Translate Written Materials & Consider Interpreters for Public Meetings, Webinars, etc.**

- Consider translating materials into non-English languages that at least 5% of the population speaks at home and/or where English is not their first language.



## DID YOU KNOW?

- In California, over 40% of households speak a language other than English at home and lament that the materials the department distributes are all in English.

# Benefits



Creates a better understanding of impacted groups and communities



Builds a collaborative, open-access, community-driven resilience campaign that will offer citizens a means to take an active role in recovery efforts.



Creates informed citizens, especially those in underserved communities that are most impacted by the oil spill so that they can understand the emergency, impacts, and importance of recovery efforts.



# Resource

- Comparative Case Study: Huntington Beach and Mauritius (East Africa)
  - [A comparative case study of multistakeholder responses following oil spills in Pointe d'Esny, Mauritius, and Huntington Beach, California - Ecology & Society \(ecologyandsociety.org\)](#)

# Questions?



# Thank You