



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Environmental Justice Policy

Q. *Why is the Coastal Commission creating a policy & what is the focus?*

A. The Commission's policy will guide its permit and planning decisions to ensure that all Californians have equitable access to coastal natural resources. The policy will integrate the principles of environmental justice and social and racial equity throughout the agency.

Q. *What is the definition of environmental justice?*

A. Environmental justice is defined as "the fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies" in California Government Code Section 65040.12.

Q. *Who is considered a stakeholder? How can I get involved?*

A. Whether you live along the coast or in an inland community, you are considered a stakeholder -- this policy is for all Californians. To get involved, please email environmentaljustice@coastal.ca.gov.

Q. *Why aren't specific positions on issues such as air pollution, power plants, housing, etc. included in the policy?*

A. The policy is not meant to be a rigid list of pre-determined responses to every type of development issue, but rather a framework for identifying and analyzing project impacts on underserved and disadvantaged communities so the Commission can make more just and fully informed decisions.

Q. *Do non-profits/communities have to flag environmental justice issues themselves or is the responsibility of commission staff?*

A. Coastal Commission staff will receive training to learn how to identify environmental justice issues within coastal development permits, but non-profits and community members are encouraged to share any concerns with Commission staff.

Frequently Asked Questions continued...

Q. *Will Local Coastal Programs include policies on environmental justice?*

A. The Commission will strongly encourage local governments to include environmental justice in their Local Coastal Programs (LCPs). The Commission will develop a guidance memo and a list of best practices for local governments to encourage them to address environmental justice in their LCPs.

Q. *What is the difference between the tribal consultation policy and the environmental justice policy?*

A. The tribal consultation policy is specifically intended to strengthen the Commission's formal relationships with Native American Tribes, while encouraging more outreach and collaboration. The environmental justice policy is meant to achieve more meaningful engagement, an equitable process and effective communication between the Commission and underserved and disadvantaged communities, to ensure stronger coastal protection benefits for all Californians.

Q. *How will regular decision making processes at the Coastal Commission change as a result of the policy?*

A. The draft policy proposes a number of changes. For example, staff reports will include an analysis of environmental justice impacts from projects that raise environmental justice issues. The policy also proposes holding at least three meetings a year in inland areas accessible to underserved communities and holding quarterly calls between the Executive Director and stakeholders to hear about important issues directly.

Q. *Who are my environmental justice representatives?*

A. Governor Edmund G. Brown appointed Commissioner Effie Turnbull-Sanders as the Coastal Commission's environmental justice representative. The agency also created an internal working team of staff from each district office so stakeholders have local contacts. To find your local Commission point of contact on environmental justice issues, please visit <https://www.coastal.ca.gov/env-justice/#staff>.

Q. *How will the policy be implemented?*

A. The environmental justice policy includes an implementation section, which lays out goals to execute the policy. The policy will also be implemented through the agency's upcoming five year strategic plan update, which will include a new environmental justice section. The Commission lays out key objectives in this plan, which will go through a months-long public review process and provide stakeholders with accountability.