



California/Baja California Regional Workgroup

2019-2020 Action Plan Summary

On-going activities*

June 9, 2020

The purpose of the California/Baja California 2019-2020 Action Plan is to report, track, and assess progress towards achieving Border 2020 Goals and Objectives. The Action Plan includes program commitments, timeframes and outputs for activities undertaken by Border 2020 Program partners working to improve environmental conditions in border communities of the California/Baja California region.

Summary of 2019-2020 Action Plan

The 2019-2020 Action Plan summarized 44 projects and initiatives. Sixteen projects have been completed and 25 efforts are on-going (see Table 1). Assessment of progress shows 58% of the projects achieved *significant progress* or *were completed*.

On-going Activities

Below is a brief summary of new, on-going, and completed efforts funded through several USEPA resources and programs including Border 2020, Clean Air Act 105 funding, Solid Waste Disposal Act, and other resources from Border 2020 partners.

Goal 1 - Air

- Develop Ozone (O₃) State Implementation Plans (SIP) for San Diego and Imperial Counties, documenting ozone precursor emissions and, where appropriate, demonstrating reductions in precursor emissions to protect human health in local communities.
- Implement the Environmental Justice Analysis for Air Quality and Transportation in Mexicali project, leading to development of an environmental justice index for transportation, constructed on multiple indicators from population and pollution-related sources. Project will assess which public bus routes could be electrified for greatest emissions reductions benefit for sensitive populations in Mexicali.
- Expand the REDSPIRA Sensor Network in the Mexicali Valley region. The project will add 30 additional sensors to gather information on air pollution levels in that community. A quality assurance plan will evaluate data collected through low-cost sensors, and an educational campaign will raise awareness among school-aged children and other community members. For more information on the REDSPIRA program, please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/Redspira/>

*Note: Due to COVID-19, some projects might have challenges and may change deliverables on a case-to-case basis. <https://www.epa.gov/coronavirus>

Goal 2 – Water

- Expand Tijuana Rehabilitation of the Colector Poniente corridor collector that will replace four miles of a major wastewater collector pipe in Tijuana to mitigate transboundary flows of sewage into the Tijuana River and reduce the risk of contact with waterborne diseases in the communities of San Diego County.
- Model impact of sewage flows from Tijuana River and San Antonio de Los Buenos (coastal discharge of sewage six miles south of the border) on U.S. beaches. A sophisticated 3-d model was developed by Scripps Institution of Oceanography. It was used to measure both the impacts of the 2017 wastewater spill in Tijuana as well as flows of untreated sewage south of the border.

Goal 3 – Materials Management, Waste Management, and Clean Sites

- Use unmanned aerial system (drone) technology and mapping to estimate type and quantity of binational trash flow and impacts to wetlands in the Tijuana River National Estuarine Research Reserve and generation of marine litter. 4Walls International and the University of California of Irvine, project grantees, will use the results to develop a tool predicting the contribution of trash in the U.S. and marine litter, and ways to prioritize transboundary mitigation efforts.
- Continue to implement the Consultative Mechanism to exchange information on hazardous waste treatment, storage, and disposal (TSD) facilities and spent lead-acid batteries and electronic recycling facilities. California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and all other U.S. and Mexican border states participate in this effort as well as EPA's and Mexican federal border program partner, the Mexico's Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT).

Goal 4 – Emergency Preparedness and Response

- Train first responders in the Baja California region on first responder awareness and operations; traffic incident management system; and incident command system training.
- Implement the Blended Emergency Response Exercises for Maquiladora Cluster project in the Mexicali/Calexico border region. Project will conduct two-day training classes in the sister-cities at industrial facilities with local responders participating in table-top exercises. This is in response to facts captured from 2014-16, there were 28 chemical emergencies necessitating continuous training and exercises in the California/Baja California region.

Goal 5- Enhance Compliance Assurance and Environmental Stewardship

- On an annual basis, conduct inspections at the California Port-of-Entry (POE) and hold workshops on compliance assistance among importers/exporters in the California/Baja California region. DTSC and San Diego County will co-lead north-bound and south-bound inspections, including enforcement actions involving scrap vehicle transport and used oil releases.

Fundamental Strategy: Environmental Health

- Participate in Imperial Valley Environmental Justice IVAN (Identifying Violations Affecting Neighborhoods) Task Force Meetings to address, discuss and resolve identified issues such as illegal dumping, pesticides, air and water quality challenges, among others. The committee is represented by community residents, environmental enforcement officers, and public leaders to discuss IVAN reports and other environmental and public health challenges. The Environmental Justice Taskforce meeting also provides a platform for constructive dialogue between these different groups to solve environmental problems facing the local community. For more information on IVAN Program, please visit: <https://ivan-imperial.org/>
- Continue to implement the Environmental Justice project – *The Climate-ready Healthy Homes Campaign*- to engage low-income youth in the Encanto community located in southeast San Diego to understand and improve residential indoor air quality. Effort also includes groundwork to partner with the community stakeholders as the Millennial Tech Middle School to integrate air quality into the school's science curriculum and enlist 20 students as Healthy Home Ambassadors.

Table 1:

California-Baja California Action Plan 2019-2020: Project Status

Goals	Air	Water	Waste	Emergency	Health	Total
Deliverable Achieved	7	3	1	1	4	16
Significant Progress	4	4		1	1	10
Moderate Progress	2	3	1	3	2	11
Initial Progress	3		1			4
No Progress	3					3
TOTAL	19	10	3	5	7	44