



California/Baja California Regional Workgroup

2019-2020 Action Plan Closing Summary

On-going activities*

March 2021

The purpose of the California/Baja California 2019-2020 Action Plan is to track, assess, and report 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.

**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>*

Summary of 2019-2020 Action Plan

The 2019-2020 Action Plan summarized 46 projects and initiatives. Twenty-one projects have been completed and 25 efforts are on-going (see Table 1). Assessment of progress showed nearly

- 72% of the projects achieved significant progress or were completed.

On-going Activities

Below is a brief-summary of on-going and completed efforts funded through several United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S.EPA) 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

- In collaboration with San Diego Air Pollution Control District and the California Air Resources Board, operated and maintained the San Diego Air Quality Monitoring Network. Efforts included an effective operation of air monitoring stations and real-time air monitoring data that is available online <https://www.arb.ca.gov/html/ds.htm>
- Developed an Ozone (O₃) State Implementation Plan (SIP) for Imperial County, documenting ozone precursor emissions and, where appropriate, demonstrating reductions in precursor emissions to protect human health in the communities in Imperial Valley.
- Performed an air toxics monitoring study to determine the concentrations of toxics in windblown dust sampled at Salton Sea shoreline and exposed playa sites leading to an improved understanding of sources of windblown dust. Two stationary monitors installed at Sonny Bono and Bombay Beach show PM₁₀ levels below the 150 ug/m³ 24-hour standard.

Goal 2 – Water

- Expanded the Tijuana Rehabilitation of Colector Poniente corridor collector by replacing four miles of a major wastewater collector pipe in Tijuana. Efforts led to 23,506 wastewater

pipeline connections 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.

- A study closed for a model that assessed impacts of a coastal sewage discharge six miles south of the border on U.S. beaches. Effort led to a sophisticated 3D model developed by Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Model was used to measure both the impacts of the 2017 wastewater spill in Tijuana, and to a future study in 2020, of similar flows of untreated sewage from south of the border; all leading to better understanding of such impacts and the planning appropriately for future infrastructure development.

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

- Ongoing effort 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. The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and other U.S. and Mexican border states participate in this effort, as EPA's and Mexican federal border program partner, the Mexico's Secretariat of Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT) leading to a better-informed community of hazardous waste.
- Completed the "Reduce use of single use plastic through a city-wide educational Campaign" to build collaboration among environmental and business stakeholders in Tijuana, Tecate, and Mexicali, Baja California to advance an educational campaign on the harmful impacts of single-use of plastic. Technical support expanded to cities and state governments to draft legislation and regulation on plastic as to advise and support business practices to reduce single-use of plastic bags. Efforts focused in city of Tijuana's convenience stores, achieving international awareness through 59 press and social-media outlets and 12 radio-television events. Over 230 student volunteers worked to donate 7,300 reusable bags and led to collaboration with border cities to draft legislation to reduce single-use plastic bags.

Goal 4 – Emergency Preparedness and Response

- Trained first responders in the Baja California region on first responder awareness and operations; traffic incident management system; and incident command system training.
- Effort is ongoing to 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

- Continue the effort on an annual basis to 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 co-lead north-bound and south-bound inspections, including enforcement actions involving scrap vehicle transport and used oil releases.

Fundamental Strategy: Environmental Health

- Implemented the Air Quality Flag Program to provide technical assistance, funds to purchase air quality flags and outreach materials to alert organizations on local air quality forecasts and aid them to take actions to protect people’s health, specifically those with asthma. Program provided 10 sets of flags, accompanying outreach materials in Spanish, and technical support to implement the program in schools in Mexicali, Baja California. Efforts extended to the Jamul Indian Village tribe by providing a set of air quality flags and accompanying outreach material for the tribal community.
- Implemented the Ask the Experts: Wildfire Smoke, Mental Health and Green Cleaning Sanitizing Disinfecting Virtual Webinar (bilingual) with over 160 participants. Additionally, three public bilingual service announcements were made with ~650 views to date associated with the event. Bilingual PSAs include information on wildfire smoke and children's health, access to air quality data (AirNow), and understanding of the Air Quality Index. Program recordings of the webinar, PSAs and PowerPoints are available at the website below with ~75 views to date on the site:
<https://www.epa.gov/usmexicoborder/webinarask-experts-wildfire-smoke-mental-health-andgreen-cleaning-sanitizing>.

Table 1:
California-Baja California Action Plan 2019-2020: Project Status

Goals	Air	Water	Waste	Emergency	Compliance	Health	Total
Deliverable Achieved	3	7	2	1	1	7	21
Significant Progress	7	3		1		1	12
Moderate Progress	5		1	3		1	10
Initial Progress	1					1	2
No Progress		1					1
TOTAL	16	11	3	5	1	10	46