OEHHA
SCIENCE FOR A HEALTHY CALIFORNIA

Summary of Public Workshops for Draft CalEnviroScreen 5.0

Overview of Public Workshop Series

The Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) released the draft CalEnviroScreen 5.0 update on January 28, 2026. CalEnviroScreen (CES) is California's leading environmental and public health mapping tool to describe the cumulative impacts of pollution and socioeconomic burdens on California communities. To gather feedback as part of the public comment period for this update, OEHHA held seven statewide and regional workshops in February 2026 and June 2026. Workshops were held virtually, hybrid format (in-person and virtually) or in person, with Spanish interpretation provided.

In the workshops, participants learned about CES and how to use it, reviewed the proposed changes for draft CES 5.0, and were invited to share their thoughts on how to improve the tool through guided discussions. These workshops were an opportunity for diverse stakeholders to share how CES might better reflect community experiences with pollution and provide feedback on their user experience.

Summary of Public Workshop Discussions

Across all seven workshops, participants showed a deep interest in how CES reflects the environmental and health conditions in their communities. Many appreciated the new indicators and updates in CES 5.0, but they also raised questions about how well certain community conditions are captured, such as air quality, drinking water, and pesticide use. In general, participants requested more clarity on the CalEnviroScreen model: how data sources were chosen, how results should be interpreted, and why some census tracts changed significantly between CES 4.0 and 5.0.

Participants across regions also expressed strong interest in adding new indicators into future versions of CalEnviroScreen. Climate-related concerns—such as extreme heat, wildfires, drought, and tree canopy—came up repeatedly, along with interest in additional health, housing, and community level conditions. Many noted that certain emerging local

issues, like carbon capture projects, mining, or data centers, are not yet captured but may negatively impact communities over time.

Improving the usability of the CES map and data tools was also a popular topic. Participants requested easier ways to compare CES versions (*see link in "Next Steps" below*), view multiple indicators at once, understand changes over time, and access more detailed data. Participants also requested more accessible tutorials and features that would help link CES findings to real-world decision-making, such as incorporating regulatory contacts or community-ready reports.

Participants emphasized how important CES has become for local planning, advocacy, education, and identifying overburdened communities across California. To continue strengthening the tool's uses, participants recommended that OEHHA provide clearer guidance on how CES should and should not be used, and how the tool connects to policies like designation of Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) or local permitting decisions.

Across all statewide and regional workshops, participants communicated both appreciation for CES and a strong desire for more outreach, opportunities to shape the tool, and ways to ensure that CES meaningfully supports environmental justice efforts on the ground.

Please refer to the Supplemental section below for a record of the questions and comments that were provided during each workshop's discussions, grouped into themes.

Workshop Series Follow-Up

OEHHA received written comments until the end of the public comment period on April 1, 2026 (click here to visit the public comment page). After reviewing public comments, OEHHA will finalize CalEnviroScreen 5.0 by considering and incorporating comments into the tool and will publish a more comprehensive Responses to Comments document on our website.

As you explore the latest updates, we encourage you to also explore our new CalEnviroScreen 4.0 and Draft 5.0 Comparison Map, a resource developed in response to workshop comments. In this map, you will be able to see side-by-side comparisons between overall results in CalEnviroScreen 4.0 and the current draft 5.0.

Supplemental: Workshop Questions and Comments

OEHHA held seven statewide and regional workshops as part of the public release of the CES 5.0 draft:

- February 5, 2026 (Virtual): Statewide Focus (Daytime)
- February 9, 2026 (Virtual): Statewide Focus (Evening)
- February 11, 2026 (Virtual): LA Metro Area
- February 17, 2026 (In-Person at UC Merced and Virtual): Central Valley
- February 18, 2026 (In-Person in Oakland and Virtual): Bay Area
- February 19, 2026 (Virtual): San Diego/Imperial and Coachella Valley
- June 17, 2026, 2026 (In-Person in Palo Alto): Bay Area Peninsula Focus

The summaries below include attendance information for each of the workshops, as well as a record of questions and comments that were provided during discussion, grouped into themes.

Virtual Workshop: Statewide Focus (Daytime)

February 5, 2026

The first two workshops were designed for audiences from any area of California. This workshop gathered nearly 100 participants, including representatives from government agencies, nonprofits or community-based organizations, the private sector, and residents.

In a workshop poll assessing prior experience with CalEnviroScreen, 45% of respondents shared that they use it often and with confidence, 31% have used it before but still need help, and 24% have never used it.

Questions and Comments

Feedback on New or Existing Indicators

- Small Air Toxic Sites – Comments were raised about potential double counting due to potential overlap between toxic releases and small air toxic sites indicators, and a desire for more clarity about what facilities are included in the California Emissions Inventory Data Analysis and Reporting System (CEIDARS). Regarding oil and gas wells, there was interest in separating active vs idle wells on the map.

- Diabetes Indicator – Support for including health data but statements about relying heavily on U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) datasets that may not be consistently maintained and the desire for additional related layers (e.g., obesity prevalence) to contextualize diabetes were discussed.

- Air Quality Indicators – Communities note ongoing concern about PM2.5 exposure; interest in understanding how air quality indicators reflect climate-driven changes.

Ideas for New Indicators

- Climate Indicators – Strong interest in adding a climate-related indicator (e.g., wildfires, extreme heat, sea level rise); participants emphasized relevance to community resilience and climate justice.

- Tree Canopy – Interest in adding tree canopy data as percentage of tree canopy per census tract; participants noted importance due to extreme heat risk.

- Health Conditions – Suggestions for adding other health indicators, such as breast cancer, if statewide data becomes reliable.

- Environmental Risks Not Currently Modeled – Questions about whether CES captures "risks" (e.g., extreme heat, wildfire) rather than just existing burdens.

CalEnviroScreen Functionality

- Comparing Versions (4.0 vs 5.0) – Requests for a toggle tool allowing users to easily see changes between CES 4.0 and CES 5.0 (*see new CalEnviroScreen 4.0 and Draft 5.0 Comparison Map*); interest in understanding shifts in overall scores and trends across versions.

- Comparing Census Tracts – Interest in comparing two tracts side-by-side on the same map; ability to select multiple tracts to form a "community report."

- Percentile Sliders – Support for the return of slider functionality used to limit tracts by percentile thresholds (as in CES 4.0).

- Indicator Change Display – Requests for showing how indicator values changed from 4.0 to 5.0, and possibly a downloadable spreadsheet of those changes.

- Wildfire Risk/Slides Between Events – Interest in exploring wildfire layers in more detail and comparing across different event years.

- Viewing Multiple Indicators – Interest in isolating communities for pesticide monitoring or focusing on specific indicator combinations (e.g., drinking water + pesticides + social characteristics).

- Census Tract Visualization – Curiosity about why some tracts appear empty or greyed out.

Data Availability and Quality

- Point Source Data Downloads – Requests to download point-source data directly (not just polygon-level percentile results).
- Requests for Custom Data – Interest in the ability to obtain more detailed .CSV files for specific indicators from OEHHA.
- Update Frequency – Questions about how often emissions inventories, U.S. EPA Toxic Release Inventory (TRI), CEIDARS, and CES are updated.
- Data Quality – Wondering about data reliability for certain datasets (CDC, CEIDARS); interest in understanding why OEHHA chose TRI as its primary facility dataset subset for emissions.
- Indicator Inclusion Criteria – Requests for clarity on what gets included in CES and why; interest in knowing which potential indicators were considered, but not included due to data limitations.

CalEnviroScreen Uses and Community Engagement

- Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Designation Information – Questions about whether updated CES 5.0 scores will change Senate Bill 535 Disadvantaged Community (DAC) status and when CalEPA's process for designating DACs will occur.
- Housing & Green Space Campaigns – Desire to connect CES outputs with local planning efforts like parks needs assessments or neighborhood-specific advocacy.
- Understanding Top-Level Trends – Interest in how the San Joaquin Valley and other regions shift between versions; communities want to understand high-level regional changes.
- CBO Partnerships – Requests for more detail on co-design processes with CBOs and how their input shaped CES 5.0.

Virtual Workshop: Statewide Focus (Evening)

February 9, 2026

This statewide workshop was offered in the evening to encourage participation among those for whom daytime participation would be a challenge. The workshop gathered around 20 participants, including representatives from nonprofits or community-based organizations, government agencies, residents, and the private sector.

In a workshop poll assessing prior experience with CalEnviroScreen, 73% of respondents shared that they use it often and with confidence and 27% have used it before but still need help.

Questions and Comments

Feedback on New or Existing Indicators

- Small Air Toxic Sites – Participants asked about the basis for the 1-km buffer around small emissions facilities and whether the full buffer zone is considered exposed.

- Pesticides Indicator – Strong interest in the pesticide use indicator and questions about whether pesticide applications (agricultural and non-agricultural) are included. Participants noted that non-agricultural pesticide use is important, but difficult to quantify under current state reporting systems.

- Drinking Water Indicator & per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) – Participants requested clarification on which PFAS are included in CES 5.0 drinking water contaminants.

Ideas for New Indicators

- Health Coverage – Participants suggested adding indicators such as cancer incidence, learning disabilities, or Parkinson's disease, if data becomes available statewide.

CalEnviroScreen Functionality

- Viewing Multiple Indicators – Strong interest in viewing multiple indicators simultaneously, especially to understand overlapping burdens and cumulative impacts; participants described this as essential for community analysis.

- Indicator Descriptions – Users would like indicator descriptions to appear automatically when a layer is clicked, rather than having to look elsewhere.

- Map Accessibility & Device Compatibility – Some participants had trouble using the map on older tablets or devices.

- Visualization of Data Gaps – Suggestions for clearer visual distinction between zero values and missing data (N/A).

- Translations – Participants offered improved Spanish translations for indicator names.
    - Toxic Releases from Facilities: “Emisiones toxicas por sitios” or “Emisiones toxicas por industrias.”
    - Groundwater Threats: “Sitios de desperdicios.”
- Pop-Up Results Window – Suggestions to reorganize or visually group Exposure vs. Environmental Effects information within pop-up boxes for improved readability.
- Children’s Lead Risk from Housing – Users found the two layers for this indicator confusing and requested clearer labeling.

Data Availability and Quality

- Coverage Error / Missing Data – Questions about whether OEHHA evaluated impacts of coverage error (e.g., low self-response census tracts) on CES rankings and how tracts with missing values are shown on the map (true zero vs. N/A); participants asked whether CES would produce or publish sensitivity analyses.

CalEnviroScreen Uses and Community Engagement

- Lack of Regulatory Use – Participants asked how regulatory agencies use, or fail to use, CES findings, especially in pesticide regulation contexts.
- Understanding Rural Communities – Interest in how CES can support health analyses, particularly in rural communities and for evaluating correlations between multiple pollution sources.
- Ground truthing – Community member expressed concern that some regions (e.g., Watsonville) feel poorly represented or not accurately reflected by current data.

Virtual Workshop: Los Angeles Metro

February 11, 2026

This workshop was designed for audiences from the Los Angeles Metro area, including LA, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura Counties. The workshop gathered 15 participants, including representatives from government agencies, nonprofits or community-based organizations, residents, and the private sector.

In a workshop poll assessing prior experience with CalEnviroScreen, 67% of respondents shared that they use it often and with confidence and 33% have used it before but still need help.

Questions and Comments

Feedback on New or Existing Indicators

- Drinking Water Contaminants – How does the drinking water indicator represent areas predominantly served by large water systems?
- General – Does CES 5.0 represent impacts in Los Angeles from the Eaton Fire? Participant noted that CalTech researchers have been looking at lead levels in the area post-Eaton and suggested that OEHHA connect with them.

Ideas for New Indicators

- Heat – There is information about the interaction between high temperatures and air pollution and their related health impacts. Are there plans to include weather and temperatures? Either as part of the CES model or separately as a measure of an urban heat island effect?

CalEnviroScreen Functionality

- In previous CES models, it was difficult to search for specific addresses. Is it possible to search for addresses in bulk (e.g., group of projects that a government agency is looking at together?). One agency often ranks projects using CES scores, so a batch import function would be helpful.
    - U.S. Census has a batching function: https://geocoding.geo.census.gov/geocoder/geographies/addressbatch?form, includes a sample csv file

CalEnviroScreen Uses and Community Engagement

- Are the draft CES 5.0 data available on the website (https://data.ca.gov/dataset/draft-calenviroscreen-5-0) ready to be used by local stakeholders?

- A local city government shared they are hoping to carry out a public process for community engagement like the CES co-design process. Did OEHHA run into any issues with collaboration amongst different stakeholders during the co-design?

- Going back to the reduction of top 25% tracts in San Bernardino County, is it because conditions in those tracts improved, or did other tracts get worse, causing these to fall out of the top 25% without real improvement?

In-Person and Virtual Workshop: Central Valley (UC Merced)

February 17, 2026

This workshop was designed for audiences from across the Central Valley and held virtually and in-person on the UC Merced campus. This workshop gathered about 90 in-person participants and nearly 30 participants virtually, including residents and representatives from nonprofits or community-based organizations, academia, government agencies, and the private sector.

Questions and Comments

Feedback on New or Existing Indicators or CES Model

- Pesticide Use – Suggestion to make pesticide use data more granular, such as being broken down by fumigants. Also, noted that the pesticide use indicator, which focuses on land use, misses how pesticides affect air quality and water quality.

- Drinking Water – A participant noted that their community is still facing many issues with water contaminants/burden. An environmental health educator noted that individual contaminants percentiles within the drinking water indicator would be helpful for teaching. Another participant noted: "I'm still having a hard time navigating the quantitative data and translating that to talk about the REAL issues of why groundwater threats is higher in Perry Colony community than the Westside community in Five Points, CA."

- Small Air Toxic Sites – Question about whether dairies are included in this indicator. Questions about the completeness and quality of oil-production data across all wells. One participant noted that some inactive oil facilities may still emit pollutants, including those near schools.

- Diabetes – There were comments about the diabetes indicator being limited in not including children or distinguishing between types of diabetes (I and II).

- Several general comments were raised about the CES model:

    - Tool results are sometimes not perceived as a true per-capita representation of burden.

    - Census-tract size variations can give a misleading impression of relative impact.

    - Large-tract and rural areas are especially difficult to represent accurately.

    - Commuter-community dynamics may skew poverty-related indicators.

Ideas for New Indicators

- Climate and Green Space – A CBO suggested that climate resiliency does fit in CES, and OEHHA should look to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) risk index data and maps. A participant also noted the intersection of high CES scores in the Valley with drier/drought-prone areas, suggesting drought might be included as an indicator. Other climate-related issues raised included a desire for heat to be included as an indicator, as well as green space, other quality of life indicators, and access to parks/transport.

- Environmental Effects – impacts of carbon capture infrastructure in Central Valley communities, and this being represented in CES.

- Food Insecurity – Question about food insecurity being included in CES, potentially via existing datasets such as the "Feed America" dataset. It was also noted that including food deserts can help contextualize the diabetes indicator.

- Health – There was interest in how comorbidities that are linked to the CDC PLACES tool could be included, and whether these would also qualify as sensitive population indicators.

- Transportation – Participants would like to see transportation burdens represented in CES, especially in the Valley where there are few or no proper bus stops with sufficient shade or protection from the elements. It was noted that this particularly impacts the elderly.

- Agricultural and animal operations – Concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOS) were noted as a big issue in the Central Valley, and there was a desire to ensure these were included in CES. In Tulare County, there are quite a few dairy farms, resulting in a huge difference in smell in the area due to the cow manure.

- Oil production – Suggestion to incorporate oil production information into the tool.

- Social isolation – It was suggested that social isolation is a particularly important sensitive populations indicator for rural communities

CalEnviroScreen Functionality

- Users want clearer explanations of CES data and indicators, including improved visual displays, short instructional videos, and more accessible tutorials and technical guides.

- Several users asked for enhanced mapping features, such as heat-map scoring, population-density layers, and land-use or zoning context to better interpret local environmental conditions.

- There is interest in tools that allow deeper exploration of census-tract results, including the ability to download formatted tract-level reports and interrogate scores more thoroughly.
- Users would like easier access to CES data for external analysis, including pre-formatted ArcGIS layer downloads and the ability to directly link CES to local mapping resources like the Vulnerable Communities Platform.
- Many participants expressed a desire for features that help identify polluting facilities or environmental hazards more directly within the interface.
- Communities are interested in incorporating narrative information into CES, including templates that allow residents to upload or develop place-based stories that complement the quantitative data.
- Users requested clarification on whether analytical components included in CES 4.0 - such as the short analysis by race and ethnicity - will continue to be part of version 5.0.

Data Availability and Quality

- Participants emphasized significant gaps in air-quality monitoring, especially in rural areas where existing networks are sparse and satellite data may not capture local pollution; several asked who should bear the cost of installing and maintaining monitors given the limitations of low-cost sensors.
- A specific concern was raised in Tulare County, where pollution readings dropped after orchard removal and the installation of an EPA monitor, but the current monitoring setup may no longer reflect actual emissions in the area.
- Users expressed interest in incorporating additional datasets, such as the U.S. EPA Super Emitters Program and California Geologic Energy Management Division (CalGEM) Hazard Protection Zone maps, to better capture major emission events and oil- and gas-related risks.
- Participants noted inconsistent reporting requirements among air districts, citing the need for multiple California Public Records Act (PRA) requests in some cases to obtain methane-leak data from refineries and oil wells.
- Questions were raised about broader regional environmental trends, including what may be driving worsening conditions in Fresno County.
- Several users asked how population datasets account for undocumented immigrants and what implications this has for CalEnviroScreen results.

- There were also questions about OEHHA's role in ensuring that cumulative impacts are meaningfully integrated into decision-making processes, accompanied by overall appreciation for CES data and methods alongside ongoing concerns about data quality.

CalEnviroScreen Uses and Community Engagement

- Participants emphasized the need for stronger OEHHA outreach to local governments, including more direct engagement with city and county planners and clarity on whether OEHHA presents to county Boards of Supervisors or provides subject-matter experts to help contextualize community concerns.

- Several users recommended expanding CES education efforts, including integrating CES concepts into school curricula and supporting academic uses such as teaching and research at institutions like UC Merced.

- Community-based organizations reported using CES to guide their outreach and programming, and others expressed interest in applying the tool to support local health-education efforts, such as in Kettleman City.

- Users were interested in how CES can help identify and prioritize the most burdened communities and asked when and how interventions are triggered based on the tool's results.

- Participants noted that CES effectively highlights fine-scale local factors contributing to environmental burden, making it a valuable resource for visualizing pollution impacts, informing community planning, and advocating for improvements.

- There were questions about potentially inappropriate or unintended uses of CES, as well as interest in more explicit connections between CES data and enforcement actions.

- Discussions also focused on equitable resource allocation, with users asking how funding decisions account for major differences between communities that may share the same ZIP code, and affirming that CES is transformative in understanding how pollution links to health hazards.

In-Person and Virtual Workshop: Bay Area (Oakland)

February 18, 2026

This workshop was designed for audiences from across the Bay Area and held virtually and in-person at Oakstop in Downtown Oakland. This workshop gathered about 40 participants in-person and nearly 50 participants virtually, including residents and representatives from nonprofits or community-based organizations, government agencies, and residents.

Questions and Comments

Feedback on New or Existing Indicators

- A participant highlighted that some census tracts saw drops of nearly 30 points in CES 5.0 due to population characteristics and asked whether these substantial changes will be explained publicly.
- Questions were raised about how environmental effect indicators are weighted, including differences between oil and gas wells, gas stations, and refineries.
- Participants asked about the continuity between CES 4.0 and CES 5.0, including whether there will be any "grandfathering" of CES 4.0 tracts.
- Stakeholders asked what sites are included in the Small Air Toxic Sites indicator and suggested adding abandoned wells due to potential community impacts.
- Participants requested clarity on which indicators remained methodologically consistent between CES versions.
- Attendees suggested improving the map display to show all pollution sources within a census tract at once, rather than toggling between indicators.
- Some agency staff expressed strong support for the hazardous waste indicator, noting that CES presents the data more accessibly than other platforms.
- Participants requested a summary of new vs. old indicator trends to help understand changes across versions.

Ideas for New Indicators

- Strong interest in including non-chemical stressors, specifically about liquor store density contributing to violence and noise.
- Suggestions to incorporate gentrification as an indicator, potentially using housing price data from platforms like Zillow. This and other housing-related indicators should be frequently updated to keep up with short-term trends.
- Proposed indicators focused on food deserts and access to public transit, including the presence of "super commuters." Public transit access could be considered as a potential population characteristics indicator.

- Interest in integrating biodiversity as an indicator using citizen science data.
- Interest in using CES to better understand Bay Area water boundaries, such as how far out from the shoreline the San Francisco Bay water goes.
- Community members reported chronic health issues such as COPD in specific areas and suggested including them.
- Recommendation to add an indicator capturing the role of grassroots environmental justice work happening in communities.
- Some participants asked for greater attention to abandoned or small air toxic sites and more clarity on the types of sites included. Participants would also appreciate the ability to select multiple toxic sites at once to better understand cumulative impacts.
- Suggestions to explore more granular geographic scales, such as census blocks, to better capture community conditions.
- Suggestions for a climate indicator that could include sea level rise (current and projected), estimates for flooding, extreme heat, extreme weather events, and drought.

CalEnviroScreen Functionality

- Participants expressed a desire for CES to operate more like a real-time tool to avoid misalignment between designations and funding cycles.
- Several attendees asked for clearer jurisdictional boundaries on the map to support conversations with elected officials and decision-makers.
- Requests were made for CES to include information on who to contact regarding pollution issues, including regulatory agencies and local CBOs.
- Users wanted more multilingual materials, such as Traditional Chinese, to enhance community accessibility.
- Some participants asked for clearer guidance on which CES outputs can be compared across versions.
- One suggestion was to create a resource listing types of sites included in indicators, similar to the Solid Waste Sites indicator's breakdown.
- Participants showed interest in conducting their own “drivers of change” analyses and sought guidance on how to do so.

- A question was raised about how geographic areas (such as “Bay Area”) were defined in the analyses presented.

Data Availability and Quality

- Community members questioned whether OEHHA would provide a race and ethnicity analysis for CES 5.0 similar to CES 4.0.
- Several attendees were curious about data continuity between CES versions and what drives large changes in scores.
- A chat comment noted high asthma rates and emergency medical services (EMS) call volume disparities between two adjacent communities, emphasizing the need for localized data context.
- Participants expressed concern about the accuracy and representativeness of cumulative impact modeling, including whether certain urban communities may be underrepresented.
- There were questions about differing methodologies used by State programs to allocate funding and how CES data factors into those decisions.
- Participants asked whether OEHHA has explored the data required to adopt more granular geographic units.
- Some stakeholders asked about data on abandoned wells, noting a lack of epidemiological research despite potential impacts.
- Confusion arose over the naming of “Small Air Toxic Sites” and requests were made for clearer definitions.

CalEnviroScreen Uses and Community Engagement

- Participants requested clarity on OEHHA’s authority, particularly regarding permitting decisions and how CES could be incorporated into permitting processes.
- Some attendees expressed frustration that industrial facilities continue to be permitted in overburdened communities and asked how CES data could influence enforcement or accountability.
- Educators described how CES is increasingly being used in science and environmental justice education, including youth-led school campaigns.
- Participants asked for guidance on when to use CES versus other tools for funding prioritization, given overlapping and sometimes confusing methodologies.

- There were requests for resources showing which legislators and CBOs represent each census tract, especially groups engaged in co-design.
- A participant highlighted the variability in Senate Bill (SB) 1000 implementation depending on local planning department capacity.
- Stakeholders emphasized the value of grassroots community groups using CES to advocate for accountability and environmental protection.
- A general question arose: "What do I do with the information I see in CES?" indicating a need for clearer user guidance.

Virtual Workshop: San Diego/Imperial & Coachella Valley

February 19, 2026

This workshop was designed for audiences from across the San Diego and Imperial and Coachella Valley regions. The workshop gathered 15 participants, including representatives from government agencies, nonprofits or community-based organizations, the private sector, and residents.

In a workshop poll assessing prior experience with CalEnviroScreen, 44% of respondents shared that they have used it before but still need help, 28% use it often and with confidence, and 28% have used it before but still need help.

Questions and Comments

Feedback on New or Existing Indicators

- Participants asked whether the Toxic Releases from Facilities indicator captures refinery emissions.
- Concerns were raised about the Housing Burden indicator, noting that energy burden data from the U.S. American Community Survey is too generalized; participants wondered if a California-specific dataset exists.
- Some attendees expected to see more health indicators given the focus on environmental justice and asked how the current set was selected.
- Questions were raised about whether health indicators account for communities where people seek care across the border, such as traveling from unincorporated Coachella Valley to Mexicali.

Ideas for New Indicators

- Participants asked how impacts from data centers might be incorporated into future versions.
- There were questions about whether mining activities, including lithium extraction in Imperial County, are reflected in CES data.
- Some stakeholders encouraged CES to explore additional industry-specific indicators tied to emerging environmental pressures.

Data Availability and Quality

- Participants asked how CES considers cross-border environmental and health effects, particularly in regions with binational movement and pollution.
- Questions came up about whether data from previous CES versions (e.g., CES 4.0) will remain visible once CES 5.0 is finalized.

CalEnviroScreen Uses and Community Engagement

- Participants requested a list of community-based organizations involved in the co-design process.
- Questions were raised about the extent of engagement with Tribal nations during the update.
- Several attendees asked how topics were surfaced, prioritized, and ultimately incorporated during co-design.

In-Person: Bay Area (San Francisco Peninsula)

June 17, 2026

This workshop was designed for audiences from across the Bay Area, with a specific focus on the San Francisco Peninsula. This workshop gathered nearly 40 participants, primarily from the Peninsula region. Most participants were residents and representatives from nonprofits or community-based organizations, followed by representatives from local government or elected officials, and academia.

Questions and Comments

Feedback on New or Existing Indicators

- Housing Burden and Population Characteristics Indicators – Community members stated that recent reductions in the Housing Burden indicator score are not

reflected in their lived experience, particularly given rising homelessness that the indicator does not capture. Specific neighborhoods (e.g., East Palo Alto, Bayview/Hunters Point, North San Mateo, Alviso, Belle Haven) were not represented in the tool because surrounding population characteristics skew toward higher income. Participants noted that population characteristics in some San Mateo communities have "improved" while pollution burden has stayed flat, which they see as evidence of displacement, and expressed concern that CES masks ongoing burden in historically redlined communities, creating a false impression that these areas have "overcome" lasting impacts.

- Environmental Effects Indicator Weighting – Concerns were raised about the half-weighting applied to environmental effects indicators, particularly for communities located near multiple environmental effects facilities.
- Diabetes Indicator – Concerns were raised that health outcomes may be misrepresented because patients often travel to other counties for care, which could skew diabetes data at the local level.
- Air Quality Indicators – Concerns were raised that the Pollution Burden category may over-represent traffic-related air pollution in comparison to other exposure sources.
- Drinking Water Indicator – Requests were made to incorporate infrastructure aging and failing water systems, similar to the SAFER program; an instance where a system with failing status ranked only in the 55th percentile for the drinking water score was raised.

Ideas for New Indicators

- Climate Indicators – Requests were made to add climate-related indicators such as sea level rise and groundwater impacts, particularly to capture coastal community concerns not currently represented. Questions were raised about whether a climate indicator would need to apply uniformly across all regions to be included, given that impacts like sea level rise are regionally specific. Participants expressed interest in collaborating on development of the climate indicator process.
- Indoor Air Quality – Requests were made to include indoor air quality factors such as gas cooking, indoor wildfire smoke exposure due to lack of HEPA filtration, infectious disease, and housing age as a proxy for socioeconomic status.
- Displacement, Gentrification, and Redlining – Requests were made to add indicators capturing displacement, gentrification, and historical redlining, along with stronger income inequality and cost-of-living measures for high-cost areas; Prop 68 was cited as evidence that income and housing burden are not adequately

represented in relative terms. Specific redlining-related datasets were suggested, including 30-year redevelopment funding data and Land Use Covenants.

CalEnviroScreen Functionality

- Percentile vs. Absolute Scoring – Requests were made to consider absolute scoring rather than percentile-based scoring; related concerns were raised about how percentile scores are interpreted and whether a z-score approach would make the model more robust.
- Geographic Granularity – Requests were made for more granular geographic analysis at the block group or block level rather than census tract level. Concerns were raised that combining coastal and inland areas within the same tract can wash out localized impacts (e.g., Pescadero scores 0 on the linguistic isolation indicator). Participants noted that more granular representation in San Mateo County, particularly in communities like Belle Haven, would better depict existing inequities.
- Regional and Inter-County Ranking – Requests were made for regional and inter-county ranking functionality, similar to the Healthy Places Index, to make the tool more usable for local governments.
- Composite Score Customization – Questions were raised about reliance on standard composite scores for funding eligibility, and whether more tailored composite scores could be used instead (e.g., a groundwater funding composite combining groundwater risk, drinking water, and impaired waters indicators).
- Representativeness Flag – Community representatives requested a flag for areas where community groups feel the tool's score is not representative, along with accompanying language addressing inequality, displacement, and gentrification.

Data Availability and Quality

- Data Quality – Questions were raised about whether reductions in burden scores reflect real change or are artifacts of census tract boundary changes. Concerns were also raised about using any data that includes pandemic years, and about updates being based on incomplete data in ways that could cause harm.
- PM2.5 Monitoring Data – Questions were asked about how PM2.5 is calculated, including whether it is based on annual or continuous measurement and whether it relies on regulatory monitors. San Mateo community-based organizations raised concern that their area's PM2.5 monitor is located in Redwood City, which they feel does not accurately represent local conditions.

CalEnviroScreen Uses and Community Engagement

- Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Designation – Questions were raised about whether DAC designations carry over between versions, with requests for carryover to be tracked across 3.0, 4.0, and 5.0. Concerns were raised that some areas may lose DAC designation despite continued burden.
- Use in Funding Decisions – Participants urged that CES be used in tandem with other data sources for funding decisions rather than as a standalone metric and questioned whether it is appropriate to use the tool for housing funding decisions beyond environmental purposes unless it is updated to include gentrification. Requests were made for clearer guidance on appropriate and inappropriate uses of the tool. Community organizations also raised concern that CES's role in SB 1000 funding decisions could cause harm, given that the tool does not currently capture inequality.
- Peninsula Neighborhoods Underrepresented in the Tool – Community members questioned why some Bay Area regions appear to show lower burden in the tool, stating that results do not reflect their lived experience in those communities.
- CBO Partnerships – Concerns were raised about regional representation in the co-design process, noting that Peninsula communities were not included. Participants raised concerns about reliance on organizational representation rather than direct community participation and requested more localized engagement in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. Concerns were also raised that co-design participation was limited to the eight organizations.