



CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE 2013 Highlights

CEJA is a statewide coalition of grassroots, environmental justice organizations. We work to achieve environmental justice by organizing in low-income communities and communities of color – those most impacted by environmental hazards – and pushing for policies at the federal and state levels that protect public health and the environment. We represent approximately 15,000 residents in communities of color highly impacted by pollution. Our members are: Asian Pacific Environmental Network; Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice, Center on Race, Poverty & the Environment; Communities for a Better Environment; Environmental Health Coalition; and People Organizing to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights. These groups span the geographic, racial and ethnic diversity of California.

CEJA unites the powerful local organizing efforts of members to create comprehensive opportunities for change at a statewide level. We combine grassroots organizing with strategic policy advocacy.

2013 was a year of big wins for CEJA. Read on to hear more about exciting advances in our two program areas.

Green Zones Initiative

The Green Zones Initiative is a comprehensive framework to transform toxic hotspots into healthy communities. The Initiative has developed an innovative framework for identifying highly impacted communities. Once identified, overburdened area can be targeted for a range of public and private resources and programs to help them transform into healthy communities. 2013 highlights are listed below.

- **Developing a statewide Green Zones program:** We seized a huge opportunity to work with the Speaker of the Assembly, John A. Pérez, to develop a “Green Zones” bill. Our comprehensive, statewide “Green

GREEN ZONES: TRANSFORMING TOXIC HOTSPOTS INTO THRIVING COMMUNITIES



Zones” program is the foundation of AB 1330, the Environmental Justice Act. We are gearing up to launch a major campaign to support AB 1330, and are optimistic that core pieces of our Green Zones proposal will get to the Governor’s desk.

- **Winning an innovative tool to identify highly impacted communities:** In April 2013, after many years of community organizing and advocacy, the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) announced the release of their cumulative impact-screening tool, the CalEnviroScreen. CalEPA is one of the first state agencies in the country to develop a strong cumulative impact tool, which is a critical first step to ensure decision-makers can identify communities that face the highest burdens of pollution and socioeconomic stressors. We are now working to ensure the tool is used in statewide policy venues, such as allocation of climate change revenues and other state grant programs.
- **Inspiring community Congreso:** In August, we brought together 200 grassroots community leaders, organizers and partners for a two-day, statewide Green Zones Community Congreso. The first day included in-depth trainings on land-use, clean energy, and Green Zones, and created opportunities for community leaders to share stories and strategies. Keynote speakers included the two leaders of the California legislature, Assembly Majority Leader Toni Atkins and Senator Kevin de León, and Speaker of the Assembly John Pérez. On the second day, CEJA sent highly organized teams into the Capitol to advocate on key EJ issues. This culminated in a fantastic rally on the Capitol steps bringing legislative leaders together with community members in a call to action to transform toxic hotspots.



Local Clean Energy & Climate Justice Program

CEJA works to transition California off dirty fossil fuels and win small-scale renewable energy in environmental justice communities. Below is an overview of some of our 2013 victories.

- **New law to build renewables in highly impacted communities:** Because of our advocacy, a new law requires the build-out of renewable energy directly in disadvantaged communities. Senator Wolk’s SB 43, the “Green Tariff Shared Renewable Energy Program,” requires 100 megawatts of local renewable energy to be built in low-income communities. CEJA worked with the Senator’s office to develop bill language, testify at key hearings, train and mobilize residents on the bill.

- **Building California's capacity to increase renewable energy:** CEJA and our allies Sierra Club and Earthjustice won a groundbreaking decision at the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) to build innovative high-tech energy storage systems. Building more energy storage is a critical step to helping California transition off dirty fossil fuels, and the decision is a result of California's strong advocacy.



**MY DAUGHTER
DESERVES CLEAN AIR
AND A FUTURE
WITHOUT ASTHMA.
NO DIRTY FOSSIL FUEL
POWER PLANTS.**

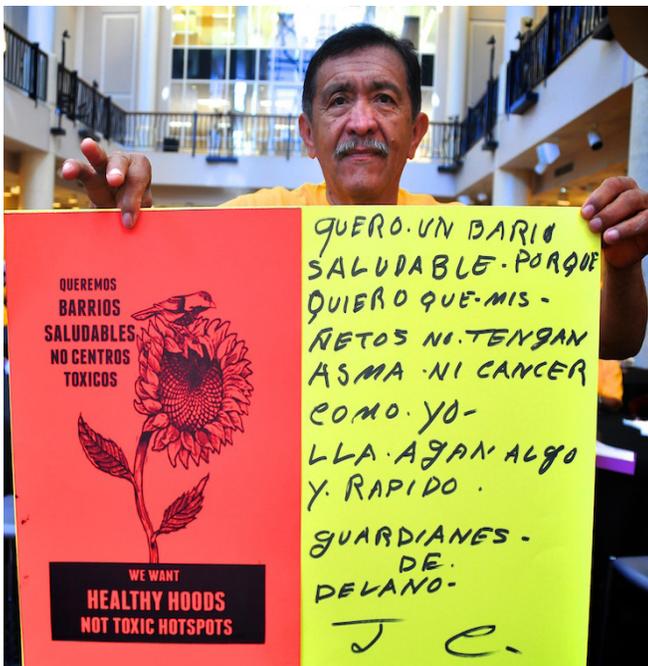
STRELA CERVAS, CEJA CO-COORDINATOR
WITH HER DAUGHTER ISKRA

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- **Stopping new dirty power plants:** CEJA and our allies helped kill one of San Diego Gas & Electric's two proposed power plants. As a result of organizing and advocacy, SDG&E's proposal for two new dirty power plants, the Pio Pico Energy Center and the Quail Brush Power Plant, was rejected. While the utility is trying to move forward with the Pio Pico plant, the Quail Brush proposal was killed.

- **Developing strong alliances:** CEJA is building support among a broad range of groups for environmental health and justice issues within clean energy policy. In 2013, we continued to host our highly successful "Energy Stakeholder Convenings" with Clean Coalition and Sierra Club as co-sponsors. The convenings have expanded to include 24 groups who meet to develop shared views and policy goals on a range of energy issues. Participants range from big green groups like Natural Resource Defense Council, clean tech groups like Vote Solar, and business groups like the LA Business Council.



Building a strong movement and community leaders

CEJA believes that systemic change in California will only come with a vibrant, community-based movement for environmental health and justice. To build this movement, and empower those most directly impacted to speak for themselves, in 2013 alone we:

- **mobilized hundreds of community residents** to advocate locally and in the Capitol on key environmental health and climate justice issues.
- **hosted popular education trainings** on our issues areas, from advocacy at the California Public Utilities Commission to our Green Zones framework.
- **hosted quarterly strategy meetings** with CEJA leaders to develop our shared expertise and skills.

Setting the stage for continued success in 2014

CEJA is looking forward to more growth and big wins this year. We have launched our first ever Strategic Planning process, are re-vamping our website and have a new logo, and are expanding our staff team. 2014 will be a big year for CEJA!

For more information on our work, please contact:

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