



## **2015 Highlights & 2016 Outlook**

CEJA is a statewide, community-led alliance that works to achieve environmental justice by advancing policy solutions. We unite the powerful local organizing of our members in the communities most impacted by environmental hazards – low-income communities and communities of color – to create comprehensive opportunities for change at a statewide level. We build the power of communities across California to create policies that will alleviate poverty and pollution. Together, we are growing the statewide movement for environmental health and social justice.

Our members are: Asian Pacific Environmental Network; Center for Community Action and Environmental Justice; Center on Race, Poverty and the Environment; Communities for a Better Environment; Environmental Health Coalition; and People Organizing to Demand Environmental and Economic Rights. Our partners include: Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy; Leadership Council for Justice and Accountability; Pacoima Beautiful; Physicians for Social Responsibility – Los Angeles; and Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education.

### **2015 was a Historic Year for Environmental Justice!**

2015 was a year of ground-breaking legislative wins for environmental justice. The wins are a testament to our effective advocacy and organizing efforts in 2015, and reflect the level of power, expertise, and relationships we have built in our state's capitol. These new policies will directly help improve health and quality of life in communities of color across the state, and have established CEJA as a formidable force in statewide environmental policy. Read on for the year's victories, and a brief synopsis of our 2016 plans!



## Energy Equity Program

CEJA's vision is to achieve 100 percent equitable, renewable energy by 2050. In 2015, after many years of work, we had a huge victory: **we created the nation's largest solar program dedicated to expanding access to disadvantaged Californians.** The new Multifamily Affordable Housing Solar Roofs program, created from the passage of AB 693 by Assembly Member Eggman, will install 300 megawatts of solar directly on disadvantaged apartment buildings, and has a dedicated funding of \$1 billion over ten years.

**CEJA also played a critical role in passing the historic SB 350 (de Leon and Leno) through the legislature**, which will expand California's Renewable Portfolio Standard to 50 percent and double energy efficiency by 2030. CEJA not only secured key language to benefit disadvantaged communities in the bill, but we were the main group connecting equity and health to renewable energy policy.



Finally, we are working hard to **stop the approval of a dirty power plant** in the environmental justice community of Oxnard. CEJA is representing our new partner organization, the Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE) at the California Public Utilities Commission and providing our technical expertise. The power plant would be the fourth in the area and would have negative health and air quality impacts on the local community.

## Climate Justice Program

In 2015 we launched our first dedicated Climate Justice program, to ensure critical EJ elements—such as direct reduction of climate-related emissions and protections for highly impacted communities—are included in California's "next generation" of climate policies.

Through AB 1288, by Speaker Atkins and Pavley, we established **two new environmental justice seats on the California Air Resources Board**, one of the state's most powerful regulatory agencies with authority over climate policy and air quality. We're thrilled that CEJA's very own co-founder and steering committee member, Diane Takvorian, Executive Director of Environmental Health Coalition, was the first EJ representative appointed to join the CA Air Resources Board in February 2016.

We closed out 2015 with one final victory: an Executive Order from Governor Brown directing the California Environmental Protection Agency to produce a report on the impacts of California's climate change policies on environmental justice communities. This report will provide critical data and analysis for better understanding the equity stakes in California climate policy.

## Green Zones Initiative

CEJA's Green Zones Initiative focuses on bringing in new resources and programs to transform overburdened toxic hotspots into healthy, thriving communities. In 2015, we achieved the following Green Zones victories.

We secured **\$1 million dollars for one of the few public grant programs that directly funds community-based organizations** doing a wide range of environmental justice work.

We won a new policy at the California Environmental Protection Agency that allows a **percent of penalty monies for environmental violations to be directed into most impacted communities**, with the passage of AB 1071 by Speaker Atkins and Garcia.

We published a **40-page report that provides an overview of the Green Zones framework and community profiles** of eleven different Green Zone campaigns being implemented locally across the state.

## Building the Environmental Justice Voice in State Policy

CEJA believes in building grassroots policy from the ground up. This work reflects the broad vision of our movement, builds political power, develops new allies, and encourages the passage of more equitable environmental policy overall.

In 2015, we hosted a highly successful, **two-day statewide Congreso: People, Power, Policy that brought together 250 community leaders** from across the state. The gathering was filled with inspiring panels, our inaugural Environmental Justice Leadership Awards, our first ever Cultural Track including a climate poster making workshop and an evening performance, a Climate Justice rally on the steps of the Capitol, and 64 legislative visits on key policy priorities conducted by 16 highly coordinated lobby teams.



We produced our **3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Environmental Justice Legislative Agenda and Scorecard**, the only report on how California's elected officials are addressing environmental issues that impact low-income communities and communities of color. As part of our scorecard release, we hosted our first environmental health and justice legislative briefing, reaching 40 people

from a range of Assembly and Senate offices and ally organizations. CEJA's 3<sup>rd</sup> Environmental Justice Scorecard showed overall improvement in the legislature, a testament to our hard work over the past several years.

**We held four community trainings across the state on our core policy issues, to train 200 leaders in disadvantaged communities** on state policy and environmental justice issues. Our member organizations brought their deep community base to CEJA's work, building a statewide movement of educated, directly impacted residents.

### **Building a strong team, alliance and infrastructure**

It takes a dedicated group of highly skilled individuals and strong systems to implement a strategy to win the changes we want to see.

**In 2015, we expanded the number of coalition members engaged in our program work.** Our new members are: Central Coast Alliance United for A Sustainable Economy (CAUSE), Pacoima Beautiful, Physicians for Social Responsibility – Los Angeles, Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability, and Strategic Concepts in Organizing and Policy Education (SCOPE).

We significantly **expanded our coalition staffing and expanded our Oakland office.** We now have 6 full time positions – two Co-Directors, a Program Associate, a Policy Advocate, a Communications Associate, and a Fund Development Manager. These new staff positions will greatly expand CEJA's capacity and enable us to take advantage of the many opportunities to advance environmental justice. We also recognized the leadership of our long-time staff members Strela Cervas and Amy Vanderwarker by promoting them to Co-Directors.

**We launched a c4, CEJA Action!** We are extremely excited to have CEJA Action up and running, which will allow us to expand our legislative work and increase the efficacy of our electoral program, to be launched in 2016 (see below).

**We completed a year-long strategic planning process** to identify our priorities for the next 3-5 years. The process reaffirmed our member organizations' dedication to the alliance and established exciting, visionary goals for what CEJA can achieve together.



*The CEJA Team at our 2016 Planning Retreat.*

## 2016 Outlook

We have a busy year ahead for CEJA. Here are just some of the things we are planning:

**We're launching our statewide Environmental Justice Electoral Program!** Building our electoral power is a critical strategy to advancing our vision for environmentally just policy, and many of our members already have deep expertise we can build from. Our program will focus on organizing voters of color to support equitable environmental policies that protect community health and well-being. We will engage in peer-to-peer trainings to build member organizations' capacity to engage in electoral work. We will also coordinate education on non-partisan voter guides, train up community members on how to run GOTV programs, and coordinate GOTV activities across member organizations.

**CEJA's first ever Green Zones Convening is coming this Summer!** CEJA will bring together 100 community leaders from across the state to cross-train each other, share stories of struggle and success, and take action to support environmental justice. Stay tuned for more details!

**We're continuing our collaborative with leading environmental justice academics Manuel Pastor, Rachel Morello-Frosch, and Jim Sadd** to produce a quantitative analysis of how AB 32 compliance is impacting low-income communities and communities of color.

**We're advancing two Green Zones bills, SB 1000 and AB 2722.** SB 1000 will require the development of an environmental justice element for future General Plans, ensuring local governments proactively plan for and address EJ when developing their long-term goals, policies, and vision for land use and any future growth. SB 1000 will create a new "Transformative Climate Communities" program to make comprehensive investments in California's most vulnerable communities, and achieve the state's climate goals.

**We're bringing solar to multifamily affordable housing in environmental justice neighborhoods!** With \$100 million per year available for solar installations in EJ communities, we are working hard with solar groups, affordable housing developers, and our members to ensure that EJ communities will see the benefits of renewable energy on their apartments buildings.

### For more information on our work, please contact:

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