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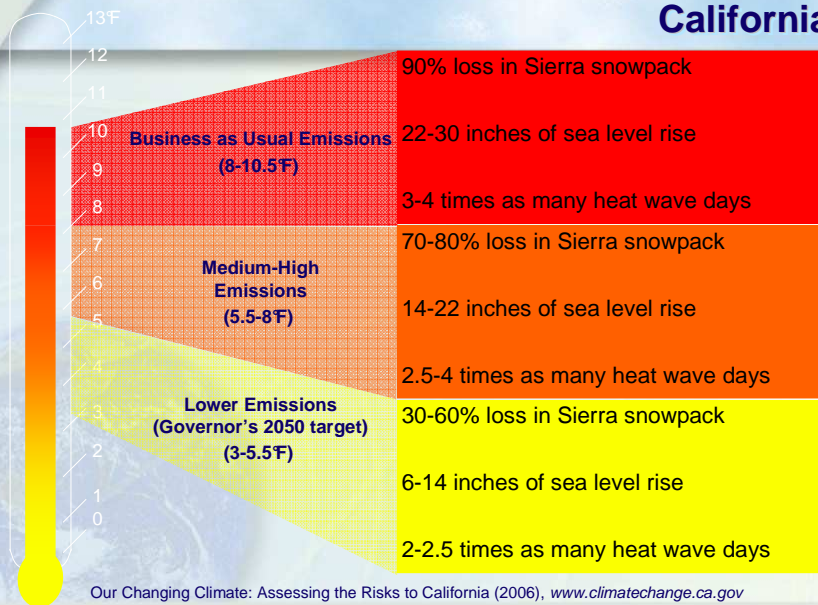
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California Air Resources Board

Preliminary Draft Staff Proposal: Recommended Approaches for Setting Interim Significance Thresholds for Greenhouse Gases under CEQA

October 27, 2008

Projected Global Warming Impact on California



California's Response

- Governor's Executive Order S-03-05
 - Sets 2050 goal of 80% below 1990 emissions level based on achieving atmospheric stabilization by mid-century
- Assembly Bill 32
 - Sets 2020 goal to achieve 1990 emissions level
 - Directs ARB to develop Scoping Plan

Role of CEQA

- Senate Bill 97
 - Requires assessment of greenhouse gas impacts as part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- Governor's Office of Planning and Research
 - Drafting CEQA guidelines for greenhouse gases by early 2009
 - Asked ARB to recommend a method for setting thresholds of significance

CEQA Significance Thresholds

- Defines a significant environmental effect
- Includes cumulative effects
- May be defined as quantitative, qualitative or performance standards
- Adopted by local lead agencies

ARB Staff Preliminary Proposal

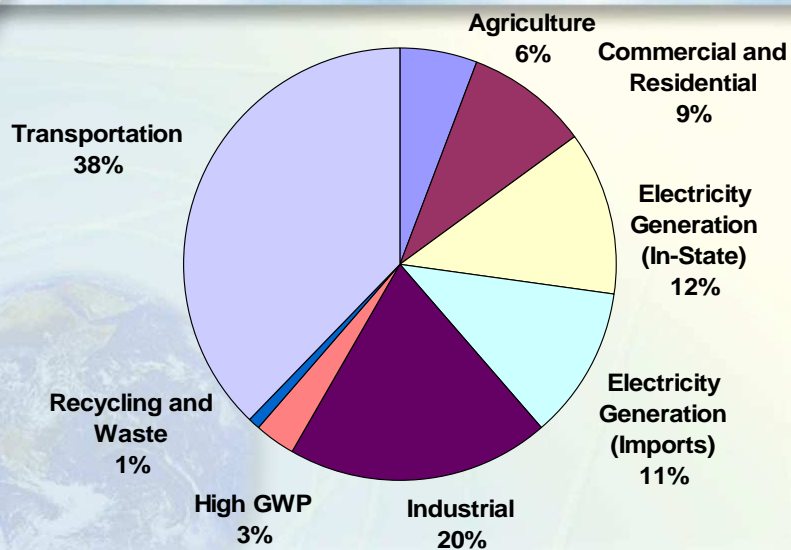
- An interim approach for thresholds of significance that lead agencies can use
- Concepts for industrial and residential/commercial projects
- Need participation from the public, stakeholders, and local lead agencies

Overview of Staff Proposal

- Industrial Projects
 - Quantitative standard of 7,000 MTCO₂e/yr for operational emissions (excluding transportation)
 - Performance standards for transportation and construction
- Residential and Commercial Projects
 - Performance standards for energy, water, waste, transportation and construction
 - Upper limit on project emissions

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2004 Statewide GHG Emissions by Sector





Draft Proposal for Industrial Projects

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Objective for Industrial Projects

- Develop a threshold that will result in the vast majority (~90% statewide) of the GHG emissions from new industrial projects being subject to CEQA's requirement to impose feasible mitigation

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Box 1: Exemptions

- Some industrial projects are exempt under existing CEQA categorical and statutory exemption language
- Preliminary analyses indicate small GHG emissions from these project types
- If analyses are substantiated, these projects should be presumed to be less than significant

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Box 2: Performance Standards

- The project must meet an interim ARB performance standard for construction-related emissions; and
- The project must meet an interim ARB performance standard for transportation

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Box 2: Quantitative Standard

- The project must also emit no more than ~7,000 metric tons of CO₂e/yr from non-transportation operational sources
- Includes emissions due to:
 - Combustion-related components/equipment
 - Process losses
 - Purchased electricity and
 - Water usage and discharged waste water

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Box 3: Significant Impacts

- Projects which do not meet the threshold requirements are presumed to have significant impacts related to climate change
- These projects must prepare an EIR and implement all feasible mitigation

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Constructing the Operational Threshold

- Key considerations
 - Main sub-sources of emissions
 - Type and availability of emissions data for representative small project
 - Appropriateness of emissions level for constructing a significance threshold

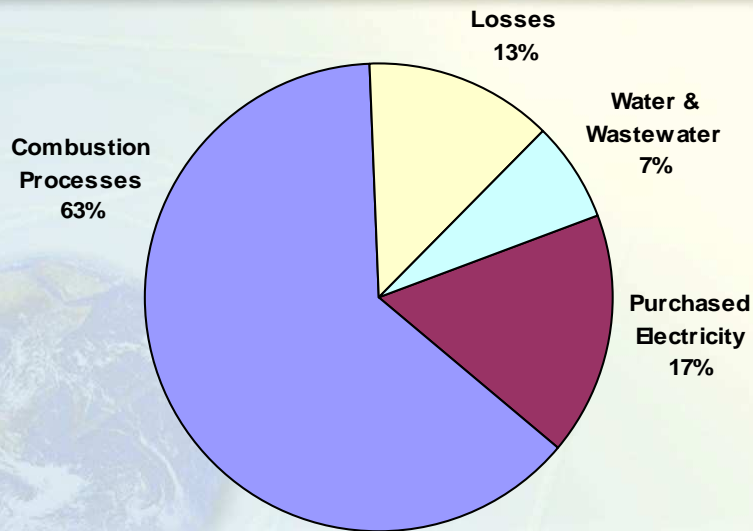
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Main Sub-Sources

- Industrial project operational emissions consist of four main greenhouse gas emission sub-sources :
 - Combustion processes
 - Process losses
 - Purchased electricity
 - Water usage and discharged waste water

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Sub-Source Emissions Contribution



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Combustion Emissions

- Is there a single piece of equipment that can serve as a proxy for combustion emissions?
 - Boilers are very common and a top contributor to industrial combustion emissions
 - Boilers with input capacity ≥ 10 MMBtu/hr are ~93% of total boiler input capacity
 - 10 MMBtu/hr w/ natural gas is 4,660 MTCO₂e/yr

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Representative Project

- Combustion processes are 63% of statewide GHG emissions
- Process losses, purchased electricity, and water are the remaining 37% of statewide GHG emissions
- Apply proportions using project combustion emissions of 4,660 MTCO₂e/yr
- Representative project is **~7,000 MTCO₂e/yr**

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Appropriateness as a Threshold

- Staff's preliminary analyses based on available data suggest that a threshold of 7,000 MTCO₂e/yr would accomplish our objective
- More specific data and analyses are required to substantiate initial staff findings

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Draft Proposal for Residential and Commercial Projects

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Objective for Residential & Commercial Projects

- Develop a threshold for residential and commercial projects that will substantially reduce the GHG emissions from new projects and streamline the permitting of carbon-efficient projects

Box 1: Exemptions

- Some residential and commercial projects are exempt under existing CEQA categorical and statutory exemption language
- Preliminary analyses indicate small GHG emissions from these project types
- If analyses are substantiated, these projects should be presumed to be less than significant

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Box 2: Programmatic Approach

- Project complies with a previously approved plan, consistent with existing CEQA law, that includes:
 - Emissions targets
 - Inventory, monitoring mechanisms
 - Enforceable mechanisms to meet targets
 - Revision mechanisms
 - Certified EIR

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Box 3: Performance Standards

- Project meets performance standards for major emissions sub-sources
 - CEC Tier II Energy Efficiency standard for energy use performance standard
 - Interim ARB performance standards for waste, transportation, water use, and construction
- Project does not emit more than “X” MTCO₂e/yr

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Box 4: Significant Impacts

- Projects which do not meet the threshold requirements are presumed to have significant impacts related to climate change
- These projects must prepare an EIR and implement all feasible mitigation

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Next Steps



Request for Public Comment

- Unintended consequences
- Definition of performance standards for transportation, construction, waste, water
- Additional analyses of categorical exemptions
- Projects that meet thresholds but may still have significant climate change impacts
- Others questions

Schedule

- Ongoing public discussion
- Data collection and analyses
- Next workshop mid-Dec
- Recommendations to ARB in early 2009

Contacts

- Project Website:
<http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/localgov/ceqa/ceqa.htm>
- Online Comments:
<http://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/localgov/ceqa/ceqacomm.htm>