Regulatory Alignment Needs to Support Better Regional Outcomes
Stakeholder Perspectives

Recommendations for Sustaining and Strengthening Integrated Regional Water Management

Working Toward Sustainability
Where varying water-related regulatory requirements and planning efforts are not properly integrated/aligned with one-another to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes efficiently and effectively, particularly at the regional and local scales

“Misalignment”
You (the State) asked us to integrate and align our efforts on a regional scale to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes efficiently and effectively.

We (IRWM regions) have been making a lot of progress in that regard, but we haven’t seen much, if anything, from you.

- IRWM Stakeholders
State and federal agencies need to:

• understand and support IRWM as an essential public business practice in California, and

• align their policies, programs and requirements with IRWM as much as possible.

Regulatory alignment at the regional level:

• will set the stage for alignment at the local/project level.

- IRWM Stakeholders
Strategy 1 | IMPROVE ALIGNMENT
Alignment Planning and Support | Non-Regulatory Programs | Regulatory Programs

Strategy 2 | STRENGTHEN PRACTICES
Support for Regional Capacity Building | Regional Governance | Regional Practices

Strategy 3 | IMPROVE SERVICES
Customer Service Principles and Practices | IRWM Grant Program | Technical Support

Strategy 4 | COMMUNICATE VALUES
Official Recognition | Information Sharing | Education

Recommendations for Sustaining and Strengthening
Integrated Regional Water Management
Strategy 1 | IMPROVE ALIGNMENT

Better alignment in support of IRWM will require concerted and sustained efforts to address the wide array of non-aligned policies, regulations, and programs that have accumulated over decades prior to the advent of IRWM in California. These efforts should be planned, organized, directed, and supported through the following actions.

ALIGNMENT PLANNING AND SUPPORT

**Task Force for Regulatory Alignment**
- Expand the composition of the task force of federal, state, and local permitting and flood management agencies identified in Action 8 of the California Water Action Plan to include IRWM representatives. This task force, in addition to its responsibilities under the California Water Action Plan, should identify policies, programs, and regulatory misalignments and inefficiencies that impede, or are inconsistent with, IRWM. The task force should also define specific remedies to establish a “path to alignment” with IRWM.

**State Support for Regulatory Alignment**
- Direct relevant State agencies to collaborate with the California Water Action Plan task force (referred to in the “Task Force for Regulatory Alignment” action) and IRWMs to support regulatory alignment with IRWM. Initiate a focused study of specific regulations and policies that impede or increase the transaction costs (time and money) of IRWM projects and/or those that do not improve regional outcomes.

**Federal Agency Support for Regulatory Alignment**
- Collaborate with state agencies and IRWMs to improve the efficiency of federal regulatory processes to support IRWM projects, improve regional outcomes, and reduce transaction costs, whenever possible.

**IRWM CEQA/SEQA Revisions/Cost Reduction**
- Direct relevant State agencies to work with the State Office of Planning and Research to investigate the potential for fulfilling California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) public disclosure requirements for projects that are fully vetted through a functionally equivalent IRWM public involvement process, and are included in an adopted IRWM plan.

**IRWM Support Funding for State and Federal Agencies**
- Provide funding for alignment and related coordination and collaboration activities to support and advance IRWM. The funding is to enable State agencies and federal agencies to implement actions related to alignment.

1 Please see page 34 for summaries descriptions of each implementation level.

Recommendations for Sustaining and Strengthening Integrated Regional Water Management

- Accelerate implementation and integration publish a report
- Implement the provisions of SGMA in a manner that supports IRWM and promotes consistency and continuity with IRWM status.
- Funding—Seek funding through the State budget process to implement preferred options for the alignment of DWR programs with IRWM.
How can we all work together and move forward?