

San Joaquin Watershed Indicators project: proposed review questions

The following questions were posed to external reviewers last year (2007).

1. Study design and overall methodology:

- Are the objectives of the project and study method clear?
- How successful was the methodology in meeting objectives (such as scalability, Pressure-State-Response linkages)?
- Can you suggest ways to improve the methodology or adapt it to other situations?

2. Case studies

- Are the selected cases suited to the study purpose?
- What was successful, or could be improved, in developing indicators for the test cases?

3. Results and future uses of indicators

- What are the most important findings of the project?
- What are potential applications of PSR (e.g., indicators of status/trends, or tracking effects of management practices?)

Additional subjects:

A. Uses of indicators (performance measures):

- Assuming that the CALFED Program is interested in reporting on project-level results (outputs) and longer-term, larger-scale progress towards objectives (outcomes), evaluate the pros/cons of the PSR framework for this purpose.
- Comment on methods for linking or relating different levels of reporting. (Examples: linking activities with measures of conditions at a larger larger-scale using using statistical methods; reference to expected results of 'proven practices'; narrative lines of evidence.)

B. Complex processes / drivers: *For some objectives, nearer-term activities may focus on documenting causal drivers or immediate outputs.*

- How might these activities be reported? (in terms of indicators? Narratives?)
- Do you have recommendations regarding conceptual framework(s) relating these types of activities to longer-term objectives? Can the PSR be adapted for this purpose?

C. Reporting conditions / indices: *Some external reviewers suggested that the PSR could be worked into an index of environmental conditions. In fact, the PSR can also provide other information, such as measures of management activities. Considering both the PSR case study and CALFED Program work on performance measures, please comment on merits and cautions/ challenges in assembling broader suites of indicators, including the following:*

- Need for and uses of a suite of integrated Delta indicators (index). What would be priority subjects?
- Need for and uses of specific, targeted sets of indicators. Priority topics?
- Suitability of the PSR as a conceptual framework? Would you recommend any modifications?

This case study also refers to data gaps and other monitoring issues. We recognize that monitoring programs need to be aligned with assessment and management needs, and welcome comments on ways to improve design and implementation of monitoring-assessment-reporting systems for the Bay-Delta.