



INFORMATION ITEM

Draft 2022-2026 Science Action Agenda

Summary: The Delta Science Program recently released the draft 2022-2026 Science Action Agenda (SAA) for public review. Updated periodically (every four to five years) to re-examine priorities, the SAA is a pivotal document developed by and for the Delta science community that prioritizes and aligns science actions to address management needs. The SAA serves as a roadmap for science investments, identifies current, persistent, and emerging management challenges, and promotes scientific collaboration. The Delta Science Program staff will present an overview of the draft 2022-2026 SAA.

BACKGROUND

The Delta Science Program released the draft 2022-2026 SAA for public review on November 18th, 2021. The SAA is one of three core components of the [Delta Science Strategy](#), which establishes a foundation for achieving the vision of *One Delta, One Science*—an open Delta science community that works together to build a common body of scientific knowledge to inform management. The purpose of the SAA is to prioritize and align science actions to inform management decisions, identify critical knowledge gaps, build science infrastructure, and foster coordination to address current, persistent, and emerging challenges in the Delta.

The draft 2022-2026 SAA was developed following a nearly 18-month multiple-phase, collaborative process led by the Delta Science Program, beginning in early 2020. The draft was co-produced with members of the Delta science community, which included members of federal, state, and local agencies, academic institutions, and non-profit organizations. Co-production in natural resource management is the utilization of multiple, different knowledge sources and stakeholders to co-create knowledge and information. The Delta Science Program provided numerous opportunities for agency partners and those with interests in the Delta to provide input at every stage of the process. For example, through online surveys and a virtual workshop in September 2020, an initial set of 1,279 proposed Management Questions was distilled to a list of 65 top Management Questions. A similar process was followed to craft and refine the list of Science Actions. The development of the 2022-2026 SAA was also informed by an [assessment of progress made on the Science Actions in the 2017-2021 SAA](#).

Like the 2017-2021 SAA, the draft 2022-2026 SAA prioritizes 25 top Science Actions. Because the SAA represents shared science priorities of the Delta scientific community, it provides a valuable framework to guide science planning and [funding by the Council](#) (e.g., PSNs and Delta Science Fellows) and its partners. The Delta Science Program looks forward to comments received during the public review period.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE TOPIC

The presentation will provide an overview of the Top 25 Science Actions and six Management Needs included in the draft 2022-2026 SAA. The SAA is structured around three main components:

- **Management Needs:** information necessary to (1) achieve policy or regulatory objectives, (2) assess the effects of a past or future management action, and/or (3) inform a decision between multiple scenarios.
- **Management Questions:** target uncertainty around a given management topic, often are specific to a single agency or a set of agencies' or organizations' priorities (but do, generally, have a system-wide application), and, when answered, provide information that will inform management needs.
- **Science Actions:** scientific activities undertaken to generate information or create tools that advance the utility of knowledge to address the physical, natural, and social-economic challenges of the Delta. Examples include research, monitoring, modeling, data management, synthesis, adaptive management, and more.

Top 25 Science Actions

The top 25 Science Actions included in the draft 2022-2026 SAA are responsive to six integrative Management Needs and 65 Top Delta Management Questions that reflect the complexity of social and environmental challenges and knowledge gaps in the Delta. These Science Actions focus on both (1) generating new information or tools, and/or (2) improving, or enhancing the use and reach of, existing scientific information, tools, or knowledge.

New for 2022-2026 SAA

Developing the 2022-2026 SAA began with the crowdsourcing of an unprioritized list of Management Questions, a feature new to this iteration of the SAA. The SAA connects Science Actions that are responsive to Management Needs and informed by Management Questions. The addition of Management Questions was suggested

by the Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee's 2019 Delta Science Funding and Governance Initiative to enhance coordination across the Delta science enterprise and ensure that Science Actions directly inform policy and management.

Tracking success on the 2017-2021 SAA

The Delta Science Program took stock of progress made to address the Science Actions identified in the previous SAA to inform this new iteration. The [2017-2021 SAA Progress Summary](#) synthesized science activities in the Bay-Delta community, highlighting how resources were allocated and outstanding knowledge gaps. These outstanding gaps were considered when developing the Science Actions for the 2022-2026 SAA. Over 30 reviewers commented on the 2017-2021 SAA Progress Summary, and over 10 external partners contributed to the initial draft document.

Among the 25 Science Actions in the 2017-2021 SAA:

- nine saw **early progress** (e.g., *"Initiate a research program on the Delta as an evolving place that integrates the physical and natural sciences with the social sciences"*);
- seven saw **moderate progress** (e.g., *"Investigate the most cost-effective methods to improve species habitat on working lands"*); and
- nine saw **significant progress** (e.g., *"Develop tools to assist adaptive management in the Delta"*).

Public Review Draft

The draft 2022-2026 SAA was released via listserv for public review on November 18, 2021. The review period is open through January 21, 2022. The Delta Science Program will consider input from the review period when revising the final SAA, anticipated by Spring 2022.

FISCAL INFORMATION

Not applicable.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: 2022-2026 Science Action Agenda – Public Review Draft

<https://scienceactionagenda.deltacouncil.ca.gov/pdf/2021-11-17-2022-2026-saa-public-review-draft.pdf>

CONTACT

Rachael Klopfenstein

Senior Environmental Scientist

Phone: (916) 902-6579