California’s new Natural Carbon Sequestration law: what it means for equity and climate

COP 27 Press Briefing
November 9, 2022
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Current global climate goals bold but inadequate

UN IPCC 1.5C Report- Oct 2018

• Cut emissions by 45% by 2030 AND
• remove up to 1000 Gt CO2e from atmosphere
to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 and stay under the 1.5C dangerous warming threshold agreed to in 2015 Paris accord

Current pledges= cuts GHGs <1% per year

https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/
https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/chapter/summary-for-policy-makers/
Western US now in global warming-induced severe megadrought; worst in 1200 years

• Threatens dustbowl & crop loss by as early as 2027 in CA
• Severe drought likely to until at least 2030; Reservoirs lowest on record;
• 2015 drought cost ~$2.7 billion and 20k lost ag jobs in California
Increasing health impacts especially to most vulnerable communities

- **Heatwaves** leading climate related killer
- **Valley Fever** => infections surging in California
California: world’s 5th largest economy & global climate leader
But California is behind:
Must accelerate state goals for equitable GHG reductions and carbon removal

Not on track for 2030
Scale up natural carbon sequestration *not technological carbon removal*

**Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS):**
- to remove CO$_2$ from power plants and industrial processes, placing the CO$_2$ into long-term storage

**Direct Air Capture (DAC):**
- extracts the CO$_2$ from the air by pulls air through filters where it reacts with chemicals and is stored or used

**Nature-based sequestration (NbS):**
- absorption of CO$_2$ in soil, trees, plants, wetlands, oceans

[https://theclimateconnection.org/carbon-capture-and-storage-pros-cons/](https://theclimateconnection.org/carbon-capture-and-storage-pros-cons/)
Scale-up Natural Carbon Removal

- Sequester addl. ~100+ MMT CO2e annually on working lands alone
- **Healthy Soils** (eg, compost application)
- **Carbon farming** and gardening
- **Climate-smart habitat restoration and management on land/coast**
- Enhance protected habitats
- Engage Indigenous communities and **TEK** *(traditional ecological knowledge)*

https://www.marincarbonproject.org/carbon-farming
https://www.carboncycle.org/carbon-farming/
https://www.pointblue.org/our-work/restoration/
Benefits of scaling up soil carbon storage on California’s working and urban lands

✔ Water and food security
✔ Drought, extreme heat, wildfire
✔ Cleaner air & water- esp. for frontline communities
✔ Food crops & resilience
✔ Biodiversity
✔ Jobs

www.theclimatecenter.org/working-lands
Natural Carbon Sequestration bill passed and signed into law (AB 1757, C. Garcia): Progress!

- Requires that state set ambitious goals for natural carbon sequestration for 2030, 2038 and 2045

- Establishes an advisory committee including Indigenous and Enviro Justice representatives
Assemblymember Cristina Garcia
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